

# 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

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**PORTAGE COUNTY  
JOB & FAMILY SERVICES**

**PORTAGE COUNTY JOB & FAMILY SERVICES  
MISSION IS TO PROVIDE CHILDREN, ADULTS,  
AND FAMILIES AN EFFECTIVE SUPPORT  
SYSTEM TO ASSIST IN OBTAINING SELF-  
SUFFICIENCY AND A SAFE, STABLE, HEALTHY  
LIVING ENVIRONMENT**

# LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

I present to you the Portage County Job and Family Services (PCJFS) Annual Report which highlights the delivery of services, initiatives, programs and services provided within 2020.

Portage County Job and Family Services (PCJFS) started 2020 with annual goals developed, and a vision and commitment to reaching those goals. An overarching annual goal at PCJFS is to provide ongoing excellent customer service to the residents of Portage County. A second paramount goal in 2020 was to continue strategies of being fiscally conservative. While this goal is also ongoing, the strategy was emphasized in the Child and Adult Protective Services Division as a result of the loss of Protect Ohio funding in that division.

Shortly after the new year started, the COVID Pandemic hit every community and like all other systems, our human services system was forever changed. On March 18, 2020, Portage County Job and Family Services (PCJFS) activated their Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) as a result of the COVID-19 crisis in an effort to take proactive measures against the potential spread of the virus to our employees and clients. The buildings under the authority of the Portage County Board of Commissioners shut down to the public and approximately 85 % of the PCJFS workforce transitioned home to provide essential services to the residents of Portage County. This transition was made possible through the support of the Portage County Commissioners who were concerned for the safety of its residents and employees within the county and from the authorization made by Ohio Department of Job and Family Services that allowed all Job and Family Services in Ohio to take state equipment into their homes to perform the work. PCJFS developed new telework expectations to guide work of employees in this new environment to ensure confidentiality of records and to maintain quality and quantity standards. I am so proud of the employees of PCJFS who ensured vital benefits and services were being provided during this crisis. A special recognition to the Social Service Workers and our contracted Portage County Sheriff deputies who continued to go out into the community investigating reports of child and elder abuse and for connecting and visiting with the children and families we are serving. PCJFS also collaborated and provided support to the community by processing CARES Relief Services applications for residents who became underemployed or unemployed as a result of the pandemic. Approximately 70 of our 200 PCJFS employees or their family members were impacted by COVID and yet as a team with the ongoing challenges and anxieties we faced on personal levels, we persevered as servant leaders.

Despite all of the challenges that this community faced in 2020, the Portage County residents placed the needs of children in foster care on their priority lists. Portage County residents stepped up to make Christmas a wonderful experience for these children through their generous donations at the first annual drive up toy drive. PCJFS received more donations in 2020 than had been documented in years past.

“A generous heart, kind speech, and a life of service and compassion are the things that renew humanity.” Anonymous

Humbly,

Kellijo Jeffries, PHD, MSW, LSW  
Director





# Child & Adult Protective Services

In 2020, the Child and Adult Protective Service Division continued to ensure quality mandated services were provided to child, adults and families, despite a reduction in our workforce. The division continued to work with our assigned State of Ohio technical assistant on Plan for Practice Advancement based on our results for the Child and Family Service Review that was completed in 2019. The division remains committed to enhancing service delivery. One of our biggest accomplishments was the implementation of the OhioSTART program. OhioSTART (Sobriety, Treatment and Reducing Trauma) is an intervention program that provides specialized services to families struggling with substance abuse and trauma issues. In collaboration with community partner, Coleman Professional Services, we hired our Family Peer Mentor. In the fall of 2020, we accepted our first case. The division also successfully passed our Foster Care Audit.

~Darlene Baad, Child And Adult Protective Services Administrator



# Child & Adult Protective Services

Assuring the children and elderly of Portage County are living in a safe, healthy, stable living environment

**384** TOTAL CHILDREN IN CUSTODY IN 2020

**3,160** NUMBER OF CHILD ABUSE AND  
NEGLECT CALLS

**30** NUMBER OF CHILDREN AWAITING  
ADOPTION

**10** ADOPTIONS

**90** AVERAGE NUMBER OF CHILDREN  
LIVING WITH RELATIVES PER  
MONTH

**62** AVERAGE NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN  
AGENCY FOSTER HOMES PER MONTH

**49** AVERAGE NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN  
GROUP HOMES OR THERAPEUTIC HOMES  
PER MONTH

**483** OPEN ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES  
CASES IN 2020

**52** NUMBER OF FOSTER HOMES

**14** AVERAGE NUMBER OF CHILDREN PLACED IN  
RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT PER MONTH

**\$367,444.40** AVERAGE MONTHLY COST OF PLACEMENT

**70** NUMBER OF YOUTH AGES 15-18 IN FOSTER CARE





# OhioMeansJobs

By all accounts, 2020 has been an unprecedented year for OhioMeansJobs (OMJ) Portage County. What started out as a typical year quickly changed with the onset of COVID-19. Our community faced record job losses and unemployment levels were comparable with estimates made of the Great Depression. Though the unemployment rates have since rebounded, the impact on the workforce has been significant. While some of the workforce not only in the community, but also within our own agency has shifted to working from home, others are learning to work in a new way during the pandemic. Social distancing, wearing masks and adhering to routine health checks prior to clocking in have become new norms. Additionally, new challenges have been raised for all with added burdens associated with childcare and virtual/in-home school of school-age children.

Through it all, the focus at OMJPC has been and always will be to connect those who are unemployed or underemployed in the community with employers looking to hire. Despite the added challenges and required safety precautions amid the pandemic OMJPC has developed and continued to offer all its programs and services without sacrifice to the jobseeker. For those that prefer virtual services, online platforms and videos have been developed so that jobseekers can participate from the safety of their own homes. And our Job Center quickly reopened after the initial stay-at-home order with the intent of providing in-person services to the most impacted by the pandemic—the unemployed. We've also become a point of contact for individuals in need of services from any JFS division. The WIOA team continues to go above and beyond in their dedication to serving our customers, especially in-person in the Job Center. Serving business needs right now continues to be at the top of the priority list and we've transitioned many of these duties over to the WIOA team. In the work activity team, they have been very successful in processing SNAP/TANF changes and orientations virtually while also completing assessments and assignments via phone appointments. PRC is so efficient that applications are being processed almost immediately after being received. The CCMEP Team continues to offer in-person and virtual case management appointments as well as connections to services that help move youth toward self-sufficiency. We also continued to offer our manufacturing program and connected a cohort of jobseekers to the manufacture industry despite restrictions with COVID-19. While we may not know how the coming year will continue to evolve the workforce amid the pandemic, we do know that together-as a team-we can accomplish whatever needs to be done to help those that we serve.

Many thanks to the OMJ Team for all of their dedication last year. In the face of adversity you took our programs and services and renewed them so we could better serve our community. To me that speaks volumes about our team and your dedication and commitment to helping others—so thank you!

~Mandy Berardinelli, OhioMeansJobs Administrator



# OhioMeansJobs

Assisting local job seekers and employers  
with their job search needs

**353**

FIRST TIME OMJ  
CENTER CUSTOMERS

**3,004**

TOTAL OMJ CUSTOMERS

**1,957**

TOTAL OMJ CENTER  
SERVICES

**381**

TOTAL NUMBER OF  
PARTNER REFERRALS

**14**

HIRING EVENTS

**130**

NUMBER OF BUSINESS  
VISITS & OUTREACH

**406**

NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS  
IN ADULT & DISLOCATED  
WORKER PROGRAM

**UNEMPLOYMENT RATE ROSE FROM 4.1% IN  
JANUARY 2020 TO 14.7% IN APRIL AND THEN FELL  
TO 4.8% IN DECEMBER 2020**

**619**

TOTAL JOB ORDERS

**98%**

AVERAGE ABAWD  
PARTICIPATION RATE

**25.78%**

AVERAGE OWF (ALL  
FAMILY) PARTICIPATION RATE

**596**

VOUCHERS ISSUED TO FAMILIES  
TO PURCHASE BACK TO SCHOOL  
CLOTHES

## COMPREHENSIVE CASE MANAGEMENT

**2,030**

NUMBER OF YOUTH AGES 16-24 ENROLLED IN PROGRAM IN 2020

**5,352**

CCMEP TOTAL NUMBER OF SERVICES  
(CARRIED OVER MONTHLY)





The background of the entire page is a photograph of children. In the upper portion, several children's hands are visible, each holding a red heart-shaped lollipop. The lower portion of the page shows a close-up of a young girl with dark hair and a white headband, smiling and looking towards the camera. She is wearing a yellow t-shirt with the word 'TOMMY' partially visible. Next to her, another child is wearing denim overalls with a 'DASHKOSH' tag. The overall scene is bright and cheerful, suggesting a park or outdoor setting.

# Child Support

In 2020, the Child Support Division made several changes to ensure clients had access to services in a remote environment. The existing web portal was upgraded to allow clients to more easily register and it was expanded to allow for documents to be secure uploaded.

Additionally we launched our mobile application which allows for 24 hour access to services such as balance and payment information, payment submission, enrollment in electronic disbursements, submit questions and/or upload documents. This new service has allowed clients to access services anytime anywhere.

The Child Support Division also expanded the ability for clients to make payments as we now accept Venmo. We understand the financial impact on families and as a result, we no longer charge a convenience fee for credit card payments. Parent can still make payments online or via phone using a debit or credit card at no cost.

~Lisa Fay, Child Support Administrator





# Child Support

Aiding in the healthy development of children across Portage County by assuring children receive the financial support of both parents

CHILDREN SERVED

10,722

TOTAL SUPPORT  
DISTRIBUTED

\$23,860,631.34

OPEN CHILD  
SUPPORT CASES

9,065

MODIFIED CHILD  
SUPPORT ORDERS

208

CLIENTS SEEN AT  
RECEPTION DESK

1,938

CALLS RECEIVED IN  
CUSTOMER SERVICE

20,361

**COLLECTED CURRENT SUPPORT ON  
75.95% OF ALL CASES**



# Public Assistance

This year presented many challenges as we navigated through a pandemic and unprecedented times. The Public Assistance Division worked together to ensure customer service was not impacted. When the pandemic first hit, we were able to move the majority of staff to a telework status in a short amount of time. Our ability to access cases remotely, use electronic verifications, and handle calls via our call center allowed us to continue to provide services while remote. There were many rule and process changes that were implemented based on the pandemic. Beginning in March, we saw an increase in applications for benefits. During this time, staff worked diligently to process documents and make eligibility determinations as quickly as possible. We were able to maintain SNAP timeliness at the state mandate level of 95% or above during most of 2020.

Based on the safety risk, the lobby was not able to be opened during most of the year. We worked quickly and collaborated creatively to continue to outreach on our services and programs. The division worked to educate customers about how to reach us through other means. Many customers contacted us through our phone center and utilized e-mail, fax, drop-box, or mail. We provided important information, applications, and contact information on the front door of the building. Many of our meetings and events were held virtually such as our transportation forum. We created online videos regarding transportation services in Portage County and shared them on our website, with community partners, and social media. Our drivers attended safety training early on so we could continue to provide these needed transportation services. The Public Assistance staff were able to work together as a unified team and persevere during this challenging year.

~Rebecca Abbott, Public Assistance Administrator





# Public Assistance

Providing families of Portage County with assistance in applying and securing benefits

41,446

TOTAL CALLS RECEIVED IN  
CUSTOMER SERVICE

7,864

INTAKE APPOINTMENTS  
PHONE/WALK-IN

780

AVERAGE MONTHLY CLIENTS  
SEEN AT RECEPTION DESK

765

AVERAGE MONTHLY NUMBER  
OF OWF RECIPIENTS

30,557

AVERAGE MONTHLY NUMBER  
OF MEDICAID RECIPIENTS 2020

14,250

AVERAGE MONTHLY NUMBER  
OF FOOD ASSISTANCE  
RECIPIENTS

**SHARED SERVICE COUNTIES INCLUDE  
PORTAGE, ASHLAND, RICHLAND,  
JEFFERSON, TUSCARAWAS, AND HARRISON**

514

AVERAGE MONTHLY NUMBER  
OF CHILDREN RECEIVING  
SUBSIDIZED CHILDCARE

OVERISSUED BENEFITS RECOVERED **\$229,112**

## NON-EMERGENCY MEDICAID TRANSPORTATION

AVERAGE MONTHLY  
VENDOR TRIPS

561

AVERAGE MONTHLY  
NET-GAS CARDS

218

AVERAGE MONTHLY  
JFS DRIVER TRIPS

84



The background of the slide is a collage of financial-related images. In the top left, there are several US coins stacked. In the bottom center, a pair of hands is holding a white piggy bank. The background also features faint, overlapping images of US dollar bills.

# Budget & Finance

The Business Services and Fiscal Division had a very busy, productive and challenging year in 2020. Even during a pandemic we were able to stay on track with our daily responsibilities and process over 5,200 invoices and journal entries for a total of over \$25 million dollars in expenditures. We were also able to process approximately 110 COVID related payments to the citizens of Portage County in the amount of almost \$150,000.00. Through a combined effort of the entire team we were also able to successfully pass our portion of the 2020 Auditor of State County Audit.

~Sue Brannon, Fiscal Administrator



# Budget & Finance

Assuring the agency funds are allocated correctly while  
furthering the mission of  
Portage County Job & Family Services

**\$13,741,552.87** PUBLIC ASSISTANCE  
OPERATIONAL BUDGET

**\$13,504,896.28** PUBLIC ASSISTANCE  
EXPENDITURES

**\$1,295,506.57** OHIOMEANSJOBS  
OPERATIONAL BUDGET

**\$1,211,786.68** OHIOMEANSJOBS  
EXPENDITURES

**\$8,685,230.06** CHILDREN SERVICES  
OPERATIONAL BUDGET

**\$8,008,265.51** CHILDREN SERVICES  
EXPENDITURES

\*1415 Fund - 2020 revenue includes 2020 cash advance from BOC of \$250K; funds provided by BOC on behalf of juvenile court of \$250K; funds received via inter-county and state transfer of \$259,822.15; 2021 SCPA allocation received in early in 2020 of \$336,174.25; 533 funds received from PA of \$275,081.49. Act Rev \$8685230.06 less these items = \$7,314,152.17

**\$2,641,947.40** CHILD SUPPORT  
OPERATIONAL BUDGET

**\$2,645,979.33** CHILD SUPPORT  
EXPENDITURES

1414 Fund - expense increase due to taking on 3 staff from 1410 in 2020

**TOTAL OPERATIONAL BUDGET**

**\$26,364,236.90**

**TOTAL EXPENDITURES**

**\$25,370,927.80**





Job & Family Services

**449 S. MERIDIAN STREET  
RAVENNA, OH 44266**

**DIRECTOR:**

KELLIJO JEFFRIES, PHD, MSW, LSW  
KELLIJO.JEFFRIES@JFS.OHIO.GOV  
(330)297-2226

**PORTAGE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS:**

SABRINA CHRISTIAN-BENNETT  
ANTHONY J. BADALAMENTI  
VICKI A. KLINE

**CHILD AND ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES**

449 S. MERIDIAN STREET  
RAVENNA, OHIO 44266  
24/7 ABUSE/NEGLECT HOTLINE (330)296-CARE  
ADOPTION (330)297-3809

**PUBLIC ASSISTANCE AND  
ADMINISTRATION**

449 S. MERIDIAN STREET  
RAVENNA, OHIO 44266  
(330)297-3750

**CHILD SUPPORT**

449 S. MERIDIAN STREET  
RAVENNA, OHIO 44266  
(330)297-3791

**OHIOMEANSJOBS PORTAGE COUNTY**

253 S. CHESTNUT STREET  
RAVENNA, OHIO 44266  
(330)296-2841