

## SOCIAL SERVICES FUND SUMMARY

Change continues to be the only constant for the Weld County Department of Human Services. The 2014 and 2015 State Legislative sessions produced several bills that will greatly impact the programs and services provided. HB 14-1317 implemented numerous changes to the Child Care Assistance Program. To implement the bill, we have expanded the eligibility criteria for the program, modified the client co-pay structure, and are developing a tiered reimbursement process to encourage high quality certification of providers. SB 15-012 will likely not be fully implemented for several years, due to the changes in technology it requires. However, once implemented, it will significantly impact the workload demanded from our eligibility technicians and Child Support staff, as well as placing further strain on the already depleted Colorado Works Reserve funds. SB 15-242 began the implementation of expanding the Child Welfare staffing across the State in reaction to the 2014 Colorado Child Welfare Workload Study. Weld County received funding for four additional Child Welfare Caseworkers and Supervisors. Additionally, the Child Welfare Division will continue to participate in the State-wide Title IV-E (Foster Care and Adoption Assistance Entitlement Grant) Waiver Project, designed to provide permanent connections for children entrusted to care, expanding the scope of the project to include trauma-informed care services.

The total Social Services Fund budget is \$34,521,500. The programs are funded by property tax of \$9,636,565, state and federal funds of \$24,884,935, and the potential use of fund balance to cover unanticipated cost overruns. The department is requesting a total of twenty-three (23) positions including three (3) Customer Navigators, one (1) Training and Technology Manager, one (1) Service Coordinator, four (4) Income Maintenance Technicians, two (2) Fraud Investigators, one (1) Operations Manager – North County, and one (1) Program Resource Specialist in County Administration, one (1) manager in Child Support, four (4) in Child Welfare, and five (5) in Adult Protection. The Board approved all positions requested except one (1) Training and Technology Manager, one (1) Service Coordinator, and one (1) Customer Navigator in the final budget.

Medicaid caseloads have grown significantly in the past several years, partially due to economic factors and partially due to Colorado's implementation of the Affordable Care Act. From January 2013, to May 2015, the number of Weld County residents enrolled in Medicaid has grown from 39,360 to 67,732, a 72% increase in just 29 months. Approximately 25% of Weld County residents are now enrolled in Medicaid.

CBMS continues to impact the productivity of staff and create delays in the delivery of payments and benefits for Food Assistance, Medicaid, Colorado Works, and State-Only Programs. Many of the inefficiencies creating these delays are being resolved. However, the inefficiencies that remain continue to impact the time required to process cases and the number of cases in pending status. Weld County remains hopeful that modifications currently under development will rectify some of the issues created by the system. In the meantime, changes to internal practices have been identified that enabled the delivery of services in more timely and accurate ways, and staff will continue to identify practice and policy changes that will further this effort.

Weld County will be starting Fiscal Year 2015-2016 with a small amount of TANF County Reserve, which will serve to insulate us, to some extent, from the requirement to use county-only funds in covering Child Welfare and Colorado Works over-expenditures. The requirements of Senate Bill 08-177 have increased the percentage of our Colorado Works allocation that is expended on Basic Cash Assistance, leaving fewer funds available for Supportive Services and Diversion Payments.