OFFICE OF TEMPORARY AND DISABILITY ASSISTANCE

MISSION

The Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA), working in close collaboration with the Department of Labor and Office of Children and Family Services, helps needy adults and families achieve economic self-sufficiency through work, job training and child support enforcement. The Office also provides economic assistance to aged and disabled persons who are unable to work, transitional support to welfare recipients while they are working toward self-sufficiency and supportive services to low income households to help them avoid welfare dependency.

ORGANIZATION AND STAFFING

The Office has its central office in Albany and three major field offices throughout the State. These offices provide direct operational support, supervision and guidance to the State's 58 local social services districts which are composed of each county and New York City. Social services districts are responsible for directly administering most welfare programs, including those that serve the homeless and refugees.

Office staff also provide legal, audit and computer systems support. Through its Division of Disability Determinations, the Office also evaluates the medical eligibility of disability claimants for Supplemental Security Income and Social Security Disability Insurance. The office is authorized 2,384 positions for 2003-04. Approximately 490 of these positions are paid by State tax dollars from the General Fund with partial Federal reimbursement and 1,457 are funded directly by Federal grants. The remaining 18 percent are supported by various non-governmental grants and revenues.

FISCAL BACKGROUND AND BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

A total of \$4.8 billion is recommended from all funding sources in 2003-04 to support State Operations and Aid to Localities programs including Family Assistance, Safety Net, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Food Assistance (FAP), Home Energy Assistance (HEAP), child support enforcement and food stamp administration.

Aid to Localities is funded by \$4.3 billion in Federal funds, General Fund dollars and other revenue, and reflects modest increases in certain programs — Safety Net Assistance and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) for the aged and disabled — related to economic factors.

For State Operations, an appropriation of approximately \$467 million is recommended from all funding sources. These funds will support a workforce of approximately 2,384, including 1,293 federally funded positions in the Division of Disability Determinations.

The recommended \$61 million General Fund appropriation includes: funding for staff and other costs related to the oversight of social services district administration of public assistance and child support enforcement programs; administrative hearings for public assistance, Food Stamp, and Medicaid applicants and recipients; and operation of the major computer systems supporting public assistance programs. Approximately \$525 million in Federal funds and other revenues are recommended for the operation of the Division of Disability Determinations, the Home Energy Assistance program (HEAP) and the Bureau of Refugee and Immigration Affairs.

State funding of \$25.2 million is appropriated for the cost of redesigning the Welfare Management System (WMS), continued development of the Welfare-to-Work Caseload Management System and related systems initiatives including the Human Services Enterprise Network.

Specific priorities for the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance for 2003-04 are as follows:

- In partnership with local social services districts, the Department of Labor and the Office of Children and Family Services operate programs enacted through the State Welfare Reform Act of 1997 so that recipients can transition to work and self-sufficiency and at-risk households can avoid welfare dependency;
- Build upon the substantial accomplishments of recent years by further strengthening child support enforcement to increase parental financial support for children;
- Improve, redesign and more effectively use technology, information and communication to support program operations; and
- Continue to strengthen program integrity and anti-fraud activities throughout the welfare system.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

The welfare system in New York State has changed in basic philosophy and approach, bringing to fruition the overall objectives of State welfare reform. These changes include transforming welfare into a system of temporary income support while recipients secure employment and child support payments; promoting individual responsibility; and providing social services districts with the flexibility they need to effectively administer a work-oriented welfare system. The system has evolved from one that focused primarily on determining client eligibility and distributing benefit payments to one that now focuses on assisting individuals achieve independence from publicly supported welfare programs.

OTDA programs also emphasize prevention of welfare dependency by providing work supports and services to at-risk households. These activities help families address life events that could otherwise jeopardize continued employment.

This new approach has resulted in a dramatic decline in welfare caseloads. Since 1995, over 1,040,000 recipients have left the welfare rolls, a 63.3 percent decline. In addition to generating significant State and local government savings, this unprecedented caseload decrease has freed funds within the TANF block grant for important programs. Among them are the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and Child and Dependent Care Credit, which return a portion of taxes paid by low income working families, and programs that provide transportation, drug and alcohol services, domestic violence screening and child care services.

FAMILY ASSISTANCE

The Family Assistance program provides employment assessments, support services and time-limited cash assistance to eligible families with children while the parent acquires the necessary work skills to secure and retain employment.

With certain statutorily prescribed exceptions, those who receive benefits must participate in work activities to remain eligible. Federal financial participation in cash benefits for Family Assistance participants is limited to a cumulative period of five years. If the Family Assistance household is unable to transition off of cash assistance during this period, the family typically moves to a program of non-cash benefits through the Safety Net Assistance program (discussed below) while the head of household continues to search for a job.

All Family Assistance participants must undergo an assessment of their employability, skills and training needs and, unless disabled, must participate in assigned work activities. Employed participants are provided a substantial earned income disregard and may retain a high level of savings and other resources to help the transition from welfare. These measures are designed to foster recipient self-sufficiency.

Local social services districts are required to meet Federal work activity participation targets. Reflecting scheduled increases in work participation requirements in Federal law, for FFY 2003, districts must place at least 50 percent of all Family Assistance cases in an

allowable work activity for not less than 30 hours per week. State law requires that this activity be work or work-like activities such as job training, community service or workfare.

The Governor's welfare reform program also fosters individual responsibility to help break the cycle of long-term dependency. All applicants and recipients are required to participate in screening and assessment to determine if the need for welfare results from use of illegal drugs or excessive consumption of alcoholic beverages. If a participant is unable to work because of such circumstances, he or she is referred to an appropriate treatment program and welfare benefits are restricted to non-cash assistance. Teen parents must attend high school or other approved education programs to receive welfare benefits.

Welfare reform also requires each social services district to screen its Family Assistance caseload for domestic violence. Acting through its designated domestic violence liaison, each district informs the individual of voluntary services which may be available. Districts waive application of welfare program rules, including but not limited to child support cooperation and work requirements, if the district determines that these provisions would cause further risk or make it more difficult for the person to escape domestic violence.

Homeless families in the State's transitional and emergency shelter system also are expected to strive for self-sufficiency. These facilities can help homeless families achieve this goal by strengthening their independent living skills and helping them to acquire permanent housing. To this end, the Governor is increasing funding for targeted housing subsidy and homeless support services programs in SFY 2003-04. These initiatives should not only broaden access to permanent housing, through the provision of additional rent subsidies for longer-term homeless families and promote self-sufficiency through various support services, but should curtail unnecessary use of more expensive emergency hotels and homeless shelters.

The Governor's welfare reform program has also strengthened child support enforcement. Improvements include automated updating of child support awards to reflect inflation; improved customer services through website access of account information and interstate reciprocity in child support proceedings; a strengthened role for child support staff in welfare case processing; and administrative authority for social services districts to order genetic tests, subpoena information and collect relevant data from Federal, State and local agencies. These measures have helped to increase total child support collections to their current level of over \$1.35 billion.

The Executive Budget continues to re-invest Federal incentive bonuses in child support initiatives to strengthen performance in "hard-to-collect" cases, update asset information on non-custodial parents, expand private health care coverage for children in support cases, expand the "Celebrating Fatherhood" media campaign and contract for private parent locator services. OTDA also has embarked on new State-local partnerships to group appropriate investigatory, prosecutional and collection staff in Joint Enforcement Teams (JET) to increase criminal prosecutions for parents who refuse to pay child support. These initiatives will further strengthen the child support enforcement system and improve customer services, thus helping to ensure that parents provide for the income support of their children.

Welfare reform also protects taxpayer investments in the welfare system by providing sanctions for persons who refuse to comply with work requirements and prohibiting welfare payments to fugitive felons, persons who have been convicted of a felony and failed to abide by the terms of their probation or parole, or who have been convicted of fraudulently seeking to obtain benefits in two or more states.

SAFETY NET ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Article XVII of the State Constitution requires the State and its social services districts to provide for the needy. State welfare reform meets this obligation through the Safety Net Assistance program for persons who are not eligible for Family Assistance or Supplemental Security Income.

Safety Net Assistance participants, primarily single adults and childless couples, can receive cash allowances for a two-year period after which benefits can be provided on a non-cash basis. Other groups that may receive non-cash benefits include families that have

exhausted their five-year limit on Family Assistance, certain non-citizens, households where the adult is unable to work because of substance abuse and households where the adult has refused to participate in drug/alcohol screening or treatment. In addition to providing for essential needs, the Safety Net Assistance program provides employment services such as job search, work training and workfare. Unless prevented from doing so by a physical or mental disability, Safety Net Assistance participants must engage in assigned work activities to receive assistance.

SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME

Federal Supplemental Security Income (SSI) provides cash assistance to the aged, visually handicapped and disabled. The State's SSI benefit currently is among the highest nationally. The 2003-04 recommendation of \$610 million funds the State cost of SSI benefits for a projected 625,900 recipients. SSI and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) eligibility for disability claimants is evaluated by OTDA's Division of Disability Determinations (DDD).

NUTRITION ASSISTANCE

The Federal Food Stamp Program provides low-income households with coupons or electronic benefits that can be used as cash at grocery stores to purchase food. New York receives \$1.4 billion per year in Federal food stamp benefits, with an average monthly benefit of \$176 to support needy households and those making the transition from welfare to work.

New York's Nutrition Outreach and Education Program increases public awareness of the benefits of participating in the Federal Food Stamp, Summer Food Service and School Breakfast Programs and assists clients with the food stamp application process. In 2003-04, a \$2 million increase (\$1 million in State funding matched by \$1 million in Federal funding) is recommended to expand enrollment in the federally-funded food Stamp Program for eligible low income families and singles and to expand related nutrition education and outreach.

New York's Food Assistance Program (FAP) purchases food stamps on behalf of immigrants age 60 through 67 who are not eligible for federally funded food stamp benefits. The Food Stamp Reauthorization Act of 2002 restored food stamp eligibility to qualified aliens served by FAP. As a result, FAP operations will cease in 2003-04. The Budget includes \$600,000 in combined State and local funds for program close-out

PROGRAM AND ADMINISTRATIVE COST CONTAINMENT

While welfare reform has been an unprecedented success, a number of cost saving measures are necessary in the wake of the State's fiscal challenges following the September 11, 2001 World Trade Center disaster and the overall national economic decline. To control costs, foster individual self-sufficiency and preserve basic income support for eligible children and adults, 2003-04 welfare budget recommendations would:

- Seek increased Federal resources through the Social Security Disability Insurance program for SSI recipients who are eligible for income support as Social Security beneficiaries:
- Reduce State SSI costs by retaining increased Federal cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) funds to offset the State financed supplement. As previously noted, New York's supplement is among the highest in the nation;
- Reduce State reimbursement of local welfare administration costs to reflect the reduced need for administrative overhead due to the significant caseload declines that have occurred in the public assistance and food stamp programs;
- Enact the existing regulatory schedule of public assistance shelter allowances into statute, thus avoiding potential increases that could result from pending litigation and preventing inappropriate judicial involvement in setting the amount of the welfare grant; and

 Merge the Office of the Welfare Inspector General into OTDA to strengthen anti-fraud efforts by giving the Welfare Inspector General access to OTDA administrative support and computer capabilities.

ALL FUNDS APPROPRIATIONS (dollars)

	Available	Appropriations Recommended		Reappropriations Recommended
Category	2002-03	2003-04	Change	2003-04
State Operations	465,181,400	467,352,500	2,171,100	321,852,000
Aid To Localities	3,613,585,000	4,302,335,500	688,750,500	7,840,066,400
Capital Projects	30,000,000	30,000,000	0	141,736,000
Total	4,108,766,400	4,799,688,000	690,921,600	8,303,654,400

ALL FUND TYPES PROJECTED LEVELS OF EMPLOYMENT BY PROGRAM FILLED ANNUAL SALARIED POSITIONS

Full-Time Equivalent Positions (FTE)

Program	2002-03 Estimated FTEs 03/31/03	2003-04 Estimated FTEs 03/31/04	FTE Change
Administration			
General Fund	160	158	(2)
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	98	98	0
Special Revenue Funds - Other	58	58	0
Child Support Enforcement			
Special Revenue Funds - Other	56	56	0
Disability Determinations			
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	1,330	1,293	(37)
Special Revenue Funds - Other	111	101	(10)
Executive Direction			
General Fund	18	17	(1)
Legal Affairs			` ,
General Fund	156	149	(7)
System Support and Information Services			
General Fund	120	114	(6)
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	16	16	0
Special Revenue Funds - Other	59	59	0
Temporary and Disability Assistance			
Programs			
General Fund	41	38	(3)
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	21	21	0
Special Revenue Funds - Other	148	148	0
Transitional Supports and Policy, Division of			
General Fund	15	14	(1)
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	29	29	O´
Special Revenue Funds - Other	15	15	0
Total	2,451	2,384	(67)

STATE OPERATIONS ALL FUNDS FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS BY FUND TYPE APPROPRIATIONS (dollars)

Fund Type	Available 2002-03	Recommended 2003-04	Change
General Fund	69,922,400	61.539.500	(8,382,900)
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	255.242.000	255.342.000	100.000
Special Revenue Funds - Other	139,017,000	149,471,000	10,454,000
Internal Service Funds	1,000,000	1,000,000	0
Total	465,181,400	467,352,500	2,171,100
Adjustments: Prior Year Deficiency Temporary and Disability Assistance, Office of Special Revenue Funds - Other Transfer(s) From Welfare Inspector General, Office of General Fund Special Revenue Funds - Other Appropriated 2002-03	1,088,000 (713,000) (713,000) 464,843,400		

STATE OPERATIONS ALL FUNDS FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS BY PROGRAM APPROPRIATIONS (dollars)

Program	Available 2002-03	Recommended 2003-04	Change
Administration			
General Fund	20,836,000	21,659,000	823,000
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	7.000.000	7.000.000	0
Special Revenue Funds - Other	16,795,000	19,500,000	2,705,000
Internal Service Funds	1,000,000	1,000,000	0
Child Support Enforcement	,,	, ,	
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	3,100,000	3,100,000	0
Special Revenue Funds - Other	26,908,000	27,000,000	92,000
Departmental Administrative	, ,	, ,	,
Reimbursement			
General Fund	(70,557,000)	(72,127,000)	(1,570,000)
Special Revenue Funds - Other	74,839,000	75,696,000	857,000 [°]
Disability Determinations			
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	160,000,000	160,000,000	0
Special Revenue Funds - Other	8,900,000	8,900,000	0
Executive Direction			
General Fund	1,760,000	1,756,000	(4,000)
Legal Affairs			
General Fund	12,147,000	11,304,700	(842,300)
System Support and Information Services			
General Fund	100,163,000	93,455,000	(6,708,000)
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	75,000,000	75,000,000	0
Special Revenue Funds - Other	6,800,000	13,100,000	6,300,000
Temporary and Disability Assistance			
Programs			
General Fund	4,191,000	4,141,400	(49,600)
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	6,000,000	6,100,000	100,000
Special Revenue Funds - Other	3,500,000	4,000,000	500,000
Transitional Supports and Policy, Division of			
General Fund	1,382,400	1,350,400	(32,000)
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	4,142,000	4,142,000	0
Special Revenue Funds - Other	1,275,000	1,275,000	0
Total	465,181,400	467,352,500	2,171,100

STATE OPERATIONS - GENERAL AND OFFSET FUNDS SUMMARY OF PERSONAL SERVICE APPROPRIATIONS AND CHANGES 2003-04 RECOMMENDED (dollars)

	Total		Personal Servic (Annual Sal	•
Program	Amount	Change	Amount	Change
Administration	8,496,000	(1,867,000)	8,366,700	(1,867,951)
Executive Direction	1,456,000	29,000	1,365,400	28,020
Legal Affairs	8,736,000	(504,000)	8,425,500	(507,304)
System Support and Information Services	8,417,000	367,000	8,076,000	339,600
Temporary and Disability Assistance				
Programs	3,266,000	68,000	2,773,100	63,300
Transitional Supports and Policy, Division of	1,118,000	5,000	1,101,900	3,900
Total	31,489,000	(1,902,000)	30,108,600	(1,940,435)

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Program	Amount	Change	Amount	Change
Administration	94,800	710	34,500	241
Executive Direction	89,000	946	1,600	34
Legal Affairs	0	0	310,500	3,304
System Support and Information Services	0	0	341,000	27,400
Temporary and Disability Assistance				
Programs	471,500	4,500	21,400	200
Transitional Supports and Policy, Division of	0	0	16,100	1,100
Total	655,300	6,156	725,100	32,279

STATE OPERATIONS - GENERAL AND OFFSET FUNDS SUMMARY OF NONPERSONAL SERVICE AND MAINTENANCE UNDISTRIBUTED APPROPRIATIONS AND CHANGES 2003-04 RECOMMENDED (dollars)

	Total		Supplies and M	d Materials	
Program	Amount	Change	Amount	Change	
Administration	13,663,000	2,320,000	154,300	(27,000)	
Executive Direction	300,000	(33,000)	23,200	1,000	
Legal Affairs	2,568,700	(338,300)	140,500	3,000	
System Support and Information Services	85,038,000	(7,075,000)	424,100	10,000	
Temporary and Disability Assistance					
Programs	875,400	(117,600)	18,000	0	
Transitional Supports and Policy, Division of	232,400	(37,000)	17,400	0	
Total	102,677,500	(5,280,900)	777,500	(13,000)	

	Tra	vel	Contractua	al Services
Program	Amount	Change	Amount	Change
Administration	188,300	(9,000)	5,400,700	(452,200)
Executive Direction	63,100	12,000	187,000	(47,000)
Legal Affairs	119,100	33,000	2,241,100	(376,300)
System Support and Information Services	158,100	4,000	9,569,800	(791,600)
Temporary and Disability Assistance				
Programs	158,000	54,000	647,400	(172,600)
Transitional Supports and Policy, Division of	61,500	(20,000)	108,600	(17,600)
Total	748,100	74,000	18,154,600	(1,857,300)

	Equip	oment	Maintenance	Undistributed
Program	Amount	Change	Amount	Change
Administration	1,251,700	29,200	6,668,000	2,779,000
Executive Direction	26,700	1,000	0	0
Legal Affairs	68,000	2,000	0	0
System Support and Information Services	212,000	2,600	74,674,000	(6,300,000)
Temporary and Disability Assistance				
Programs	52,000	1,000	0	0
Transitional Supports and Policy, Division of	44,900	600	0	0
Total	1,655,300	36,400	81,342,000	(3,521,000)

STATE OPERATIONS - OTHER THAN GENERAL FUND AND OFFSET FUNDS SUMMARY OF APPROPRIATIONS AND CHANGES 2003-04 RECOMMENDED (dollars)

	Total		Personal Service	
Program	Amount	Change	Amount	Change
Administration	27,000,000	2,705,000	600,000	0
Child Support Enforcement	30,100,000	92,000	0	0
Disability Determinations	168,900,000	0	68,000,000	(4,450,000)
System Support and Information Services	88,100,000	6,300,000	0	0
Temporary and Disability Assistance				
Programs	10,100,000	600,000	0	0
Transitional Supports and Policy, Division of	5,417,000	0	870,000	0
Total	329,617,000	9,697,000	69,470,000	(4,450,000)

	Nonperson	Nonpersonal Service		Indistributed
Program	Amount	Change	Amount	Change
Administration	250,000	0	26,150,000	2,705,000
Child Support Enforcement	0	0	30,100,000	92,000
Disability Determinations	92,000,000	4,450,000	8,900,000	0
System Support and Information Services Temporary and Disability Assistance	0	0	88,100,000	6,300,000
Programs	0	0	10,100,000	600,000
Transitional Supports and Policy, Division of	405,000	0	4,142,000	0
Total	92,655,000	4,450,000	167,492,000	9,697,000

AID TO LOCALITIES ALL FUNDS FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS BY FUND TYPE APPROPRIATIONS (dollars)

Fund Type	Available 2002-03	Recommended 2003-04	Change
General Fund	957,088,000	1,386,933,900	429,845,900
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	2,596,747,000	2,887,026,600	290,279,600
Special Revenue Funds - Other	49,750,000	18,375,000	(31,375,000)
Fiduciary Funds	10,000,000	10,000,000	0
Total	3,613,585,000	4,302,335,500	688,750,500
Adjustments:			

Adjustments:
Prior Year Deficiency
Temporary and Disability Assistance,
Office of
General Fund 10,000,000

Transfer(s) To
Labor, Department of
Special Revenue Funds - Federal
Appropriated 2002-03 3,656,338,000

AID TO LOCALITIES ALL FUNDS FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS BY PROGRAM APPROPRIATIONS (dollars)

Program	Available 2002-03	Recommended 2003-04	Change
Administration		2000 04	Onlange
Special Revenue Funds - Other	30,000,000	0	(30,000,000)
Child Support Enforcement	00,000,000	· ·	(00,000,000)
General Fund	27.700.000	30.774.000	3,074,000
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	100,000,000	100,000,000	0
Special Revenue Funds - Other	150,000	75,000	(75,000)
Employment Services	,	,	(12,200)
General Fund	67,040,000	66,421,900	(618,100)
Food Assistance Program	- ,,	, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,	(,,
General Fund	1,100,000	300,000	(800,000)
Special Revenue Funds - Other	1,100,000	300,000	(800,000)
Food Stamp Administration Program	, ,	,	, , ,
General Fund	106,681,000	101,680,000	(5,001,000)
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	246,000,000	294,526,600	48,526,600
Special Revenue Funds - Other	7,500,000	8,000,000	500,000
Temporary and Disability Assistance			
Administration			
General Fund	186,823,000	178,458,000	(8,365,000)
Temporary and Disability Assistance			
Programs			
General Fund	439,159,000	880,550,000	441,391,000
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	2,197,247,000	2,439,000,000	241,753,000
Special Revenue Funds - Other	1,000,000	0	(1,000,000)
Fiduciary Funds	10,000,000	10,000,000	0
Transitional Supports and Policy, Division of			
General Fund	125,750,000	128,750,000	3,000,000
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	53,500,000	53,500,000	0
Special Revenue Funds - Other	10,000,000	10,000,000	0
Community Projects			
General Fund	2,835,000	0	(2,835,000)
Total	3,613,585,000	4,302,335,500	688,750,500

CAPITAL PROJECTS ALL FUNDS FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS BY PROGRAM APPROPRIATIONS (dollars)

Available 2002-03	Recommended 2003-04	Change	Reappropriations 2003-04
0	0	0	1,500,000
30,000,000	30,000,000	0	140,236,000
30,000,000	30,000,000	0	141,736,000
	2002-03 0 30,000,000	2002-03 2003-04 0 0 30,000,000 30,000,000	2002-03 2003-04 Change 0 0 0 30,000,000 30,000,000 0