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CASELOAD EXITS AT THE LOCAL LEVEL: OCTOBER 2014 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 2015

ANN MYATT JAMES, PhD
Project Analyst

LETITIA LOGAN PASSARELLA, MPP
Research Director

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For additional information about the report or the study, please contact Letitia Logan Passarella (410.706.2479, llogan@ssw.umaryland.edu) at the School of Social Work. Please visit our Web site, www.familywelfare.umaryland.edu, for additional copies of this and our other reports.

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INTRODUCTION

In recent years, Maryland's Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA) program has experienced a statewide decrease in its case closures. In federal fiscal year (FFY) 2012, the state had 28,403 case closures. By FFY 2015, these closures declined to 23,133, which represented a nearly 20% decline.

This trend may be largely explained by improvements in the state's labor market. In February 2010, the state experienced its highest rate of unemployment (7.8%) since the beginning of the Great Recession. By September 2015, the percentage of unemployed workers had declined to just 5% of the labor force (Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing, & Regulation, 2016).

As more workers secured jobs, the state experienced a subsequent decrease in the number of families receiving TCA benefits which meant there were fewer cases that could close. In December 2010, the recession-era caseload peaked at 29,637 cases. It then began to decline steadily to 23,149 cases by September 2015 (Maryland Department of Human Resources, n.d.).

This latest edition in the *Caseload Exits at the Local Level* series describes the continuation of this pattern of TCA case closures. This report examines case closures during FFY 2015, which is the one-year period of October 2014 to September 2015. It employs a series of tables and figures to characterize statewide and jurisdictional trends in case closures. Case closure information, where appropriate, is compared with open TCA cases in October 2014 and historical case closure data to highlight relevant changes and trends.

Outcomes of the analyses provide policymakers and program managers with information to better understand the characteristics and reasons for case closure.

A supplemental appendix supplies additional detailed information about TCA case closures for each of the state's 24 jurisdictions. This level of analysis helps demonstrate intra-state variations in case closures. It also provides local caseworkers, nonprofit practitioners, and others who serve current and former TCA participants further insight into the closures occurring in their particular locales.

METHODS

This report characterizes the 23,133 TCA cases that closed in Maryland between October 2014 and September 2015. Cases were closed for any duration of time, including those closing and reopening within 30 days. For cases closing multiple times during the year, we ensured a case was represented only once by randomly selecting one of its closures for inclusion in the analyses. Hence, the counts of case closures will not match those of Maryland's Department of Human Resources.

Analyses in this report are produced using data from the Client Automated Resources and Eligibility System (CARES). This computerized management information system is maintained by the State of Maryland. It contributes individual- and case-level demographic characteristics and participation data for the TCA program.

FINDINGS

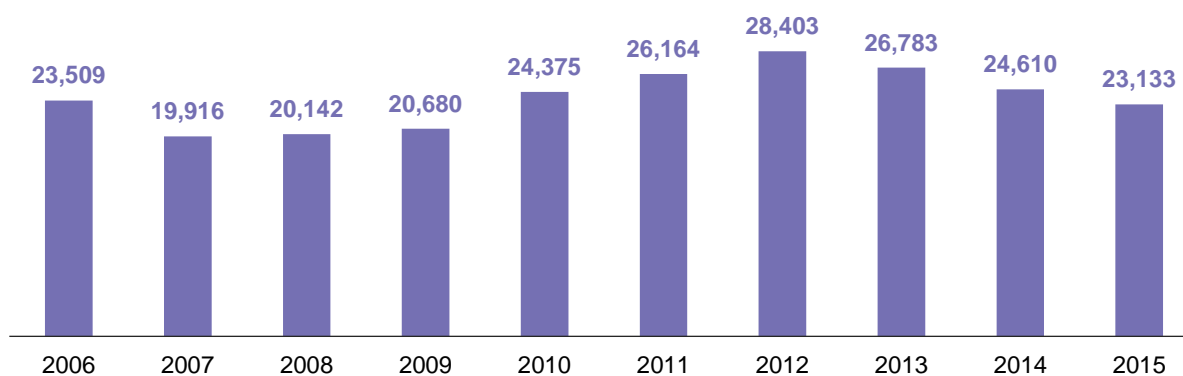
Case Closures over Time

During the last decade, Maryland has experienced fluctuations in the number of its TCA closures, which are illustrated in Figure 1. In FFY 2007, the state reported its lowest number of closures (19,916) since the enactment of welfare reform in 1996. During the next five years, the number of closures increased to 28,403 in FFY 2012. Since FFY 2012, the state experienced a consistent decrease. In FFY 2015, it had just 23,133 closures, which represented a decline of 1,477 cases from the previous fiscal year.

This pattern may be explained by changes in the state's TCA caseload as it responds

to prevailing economic conditions. Indeed, the number of families receiving benefits reached a historic low in March 2007, including 20,725 cases (Maryland Department of Human Resources, n.d.). Between March 2007 and September 2012, the number of open cases grew to 27,572 as families impacted by the recession sought assistance (Saunders, Young, & Born, 2010; Nicoli, Passarella, & Born, 2012; Maryland Department of Human Resources, n.d.). As the economy improved, the number of open cases shrank to 23,149 cases by September 2015; this change prompted a decline in closures as there were fewer TCA cases to close.

Figure 1. Statewide Case Closures by Year: FFY 2006 to FFY 2015



Note: The annual number of case closures is a count of unique assistance units receiving TCA that closed during the specified federal fiscal year (FFY) which is a one-year time period that begins in October of the previous calendar year. For example, FFY 2015 represents the months of October 2014 to September 2015.

This trend may also be explained by the distribution of TCA cases across the state. Presently, open and closed cases concentrate in the state's five most populated jurisdictions: Baltimore City along with Baltimore, Prince George's, Anne Arundel, and Montgomery counties. This concentration makes sense as most families reside in these jurisdictions. It also implies

that closure patterns of these five jurisdictions help drive the statewide trend.

Table 1 shows the extent to which closed cases clustered in the state's five most populous jurisdictions. In FFY 2015, three quarters of closed cases—that is, 17,427 of the state's 23,133 closed cases—occurred in these locations.

Table 1. Change in the Number of Case Closures*FFY 2014 to FFY 2015*

	Total Closures FFY 2014	Total Closures FFY 2015	Percent Change & Difference in Closures
Baltimore City	10,518	9,492	-9.8% (-1,026)
Baltimore County	3,032	2,937	-3.1% (-95)
Prince George's County	2,650	2,344	-11.5% (-306)
Anne Arundel County	1,371	1,381	0.7% (10)
Montgomery County	1187	1,273	7.2% (86)
Wicomico County	713	693	-2.8% (-20)
Washington County	605	656	8.4% (51)
Harford County	511	522	2.2% (11)
Cecil County	568	511	-10.0% (-57)
St. Mary's County	462	494	6.9% (32)
Howard County	639	442	-30.8% (-197)
Charles County	419	410	-2.1% (-9)
Allegany County	367	403	9.8% (36)
Frederick County	406	374	-7.9% (-32)
Carroll County	166	234	41.0% (68)
Dorchester County	220	220	0.0% (0)
Somerset County	136	161	18.4% (25)
Caroline County	146	134	-8.2% (-12)
Calvert County	112	117	4.5% (5)
Queen Anne's County	82	90	9.8% (8)
Worcester County	72	75	4.2% (3)
Kent County	81	66	-18.5% (-15)
Garrett County	74	60	-18.9% (-14)
Talbot County	56	44	-21.4% (-12)
Maryland	24,610	23,133	-6.0% (-1,477)

Note: Counts may not sum to the actual sample size because of missing data; 17 closed cases had no associated jurisdictional code in FFY 2014.

In this jurisdictional cluster, Baltimore City maintained the largest number and share of closures. In FFY 2015, Baltimore City had 9,492 closed cases, which means that two in every five (41%) closures occurred in Baltimore City. This was more than three times the number of closures in Baltimore County, which had the second-largest number of closures (2,937).

Given its large number of closures, Baltimore City helped drive Maryland's 6%

decline between FFYs 2014 and 2015.

Baltimore City had a 9.8% decrease representing 1,026 closures. Such declines also occurred among the populated jurisdictions of Baltimore (-3.1%) and Prince George's counties (-11.5%).¹

Outside of this concentration, nine of the remaining 19 counties experienced declines in closures. Howard County reported the largest decrease (-30.8%), which meant that 197 fewer cases closed there than in FFY

¹ Anne Arundel and Montgomery counties had an increase in the number of closed cases. In fact, Montgomery County had the largest numerical increase in closures of any jurisdiction (86 cases).

While notable, it is unlikely that these two counties had any noticeable effect on the pattern of decline occurring within the jurisdictional cluster as these 96 cases totaled less than 1% of the cluster's closures.

2014. While this represented a substantial change for the county, it likely had a negligible impact on the statewide trend.

An additional ten counties had increases or no change in closures.² Increases occurred in the nine jurisdictions of Washington, Harford, St. Mary's, Allegany, Carroll, Somerset, Calvert, Queen Anne's, and Worcester counties, with Carroll County having the largest increase (41% or 68 cases). Although such changes are important for these places, it is unlikely that these counties had any noticeable effect statewide due to the small number of closures.

Case Characteristics

The TCA program supports low-income families with children, and usually the receipt of benefits is temporary. This information is shown in Table 2, which provides the characteristics of the state's closed and open cases.³ It includes the number and share of children and adult recipients represented on these cases as well as the number of months in which benefits were received.

Composition

Statewide, a majority of cases included just one or two children. Such cases numbered three in every four (74.7%) of the state's closures in FFY 2015. The same was true for open cases receiving benefits in October 2014.

This trend was consistent across the state's 24 jurisdictions. In fact, a majority of closures in every jurisdiction included just one or two children. This percentage ranged

from 64% (Kent County) to 88% (Worcester County) of each county's closures. In Baltimore City, 75% of closures included just one or two children which was in line with that observed statewide.

Some cases providing assistance to children do not include any adult recipients in the calculation of the TCA grant. These cases may provide support to the children of parents who are otherwise ineligible to receive cash assistance. Alternatively, these cases may include children who reside with a caretaker relative or other legal guardian, like a child who lives with her grandmother (Hetling, Saunders, & Born, 2005).

As in our previous reports, cases with no adult recipients described a smaller percentage of the state's closures relative to its open cases. In FFY 2015, cases with no adult recipients accounted for less than 20% of Maryland's closed cases. Yet, these cases represented more than 30% of the open cases.

Cases with no adult recipients comprised widely varying shares of jurisdictions' closures. These cases amounted to a relatively small percentage of closures in Baltimore City (12.3%) as well as Somerset (13.7%) and St. Mary's (14.4%) counties. Cases with no adult recipients described one in every four closures in Carroll (24.8%), Garrett (25.0%), and Prince George's (25.1%) counties. Such cases accounted for more than two in every five closed cases in Talbot (43.2%) and Caroline (48.5%) counties.

The trends observed among cases with no adult recipients contrast with those

² Neither an increase nor decrease occurred in Dorchester County, which had 220 closures in each year.

³ The supplemental appendix includes a series of detailed jurisdictional profiles.

observed among cases with two adult recipients. Statewide, cases with two adult recipients comprised a larger percentage of closures (5.2%) relative to open cases (3.2%). These cases also formed a small minority of jurisdictions' closures. In fact,

such cases accounted for less than 10% of closures in all but six counties: Allegany (14.6%), Garrett (21.7%), Kent (10.6%), Montgomery (11.4%), Queen Anne's (14.4%), and St. Mary's (11.5%).

Table 2. Case Characteristics: Statewide

	Closed Cases FFY 2015 (n=23,133)		Open Cases Oct. 2014 (n=23,107)	
Recipient Children				
0 (expectant mother)	2.8%	(649)	2.6%	(604)
1	46.3%	(10,718)	47.3%	(10,931)
2	28.4%	(6,574)	28.1%	(6,493)
3 or more	22.4%	(5,189)	22.0%	(5,079)
Recipient Adults				
0 (children only)	17.5%	(4,052)	32.1%	(7,424)
1	77.3%	(17,879)	64.3%	(14,868)
2	5.2%	(1,199)	3.5%	(815)
Months of TCA Receipt				
Average [Median] TCA Spell	10.6	[6]	14.4	[5]
Average [Median] in Previous 60 Months	23.2	[18]	27.8	[24]

Note: A TCA spell is the consecutive number of months a family received cash assistance and is calculated from the most recent application date to the case closure date. For closed cases, months of receipt in the last 60 months refers to the 60 months prior to case closure. For open TCA cases, this is the 60 months prior to October 2014. Counts may not sum to the actual sample size because of missing data. Valid percentages are reported.

TCA Receipt

Generally, cases received TCA benefits for a brief period of time. This trend was consistent for closed and open cases statewide and among the jurisdictions. It characterized both recent TCA spells and months of receipt in the past five years.

Statewide, many cases received benefits for only a few consecutive months.⁴ In FFY 2015, closed cases received TCA for a median of six consecutive months. Similarly, open cases received assistance for a median of five consecutive months. This means that half of the families included on closed cases received benefits for six or

fewer months and half received benefits for six months or longer.

This trend was consistent across the jurisdictions. Case closures in 18 of the 24 jurisdictions had a median TCA spell of five or six consecutive months. In fact, closures in only six jurisdictions received benefits for a median duration in excess of six consecutive months. These median values varied from seven months in Caroline and Prince George's counties to 10 months in Talbot County.

Cases also tended to receive benefits for a relatively short period of time in the past five years. Half of the state's closed cases

⁴ This period of receipt is referred to as a TCA spell, which is the consecutive number of months a family

received cash assistance. It is calculated from the most recent application date to the case closure date.

received benefits for 18 months or less. This period was half of a year shorter than the 24-month median that characterized open cases.

A similar trend occurred among the jurisdictions. Half of closures in 22 jurisdictions received TCA benefits for 18 months or less in the past five years. This median value ranged from 10 months in Calvert and Queen Anne's counties to 18 months in Baltimore and Howard counties. Closed cases in Baltimore City and Talbot County had more cumulative months of benefits receipt. In Baltimore City, half of the case closures received benefits for 23 months or less in the past five years, and half received benefits for 23 months or longer.

Work-Eligible Cases
<i>Cases in which an adult is subject to work participation requirements</i>
Single-Parent Cases
Traditional TCA cases with a single parent
Earnings Cases
Client has earnings below the eligibility threshold
Short-term Disabled
A member of the assistance unit has a disability lasting less than 12 months
Legal Immigrant[^]
Qualified immigrants who do not meet the requirements to receive federally-funded TCA
Domestic Violence
A victim of domestic/family violence who receives a good cause waiver for certain requirements
Two-Parent Cases[^]
Two able-bodied adults who share a child
[^] These cases do not receive federal TANF funding and are not included in the federal work participation rate.

Caseload Designations

In addition to prior benefit receipt and case composition, case closures also varied in terms of caseload designations. A caseload designation is derived from a hierarchical classification system that sorts cases according to the characteristics of the recipients included on the TCA case. Each case receives only one designation, even if more than one may be appropriate.

There are 11 potential caseload designations. Table 3 organizes those caseload designations into two broad categories of work-eligible and work-exempt. Work-eligible cases include adults subject to the program's work participation requirements. In contrast, work-exempt cases do not require the adult to participate in work activities.

Work-Eligible Cases

As in previous years, work-eligible cases characterized a majority (60.4%) of the state's closures. This share was almost twice that of open cases (38.5%). Although this difference is large, it also makes sense. Work-eligible cases are subject to numerous and complex program rules allowing for many opportunities to close.

This trend was fairly consistent across the state. In FFY 2015, work-eligible cases exceeded half of closures in all but eight jurisdictions: Allegany (50.1%), Garrett (45.0%), and Washington (42.7%) counties in Western Maryland as well as the Eastern Shore counties of Caroline (32.8%), Cecil (47.9%), Kent (50.0%), Talbot (34.1%), and Worcester (38.7%).

Within the work-eligible category, the single-parent designation was the most common statewide. This designation described 42%

of the state's closed cases and 27% of its open cases. It characterized seven out of every 10 of the state's work-eligible closures.

The distribution of single-parent closures varied widely across the state; it oftentimes tracked closely with the percentage of work-eligible closures among the jurisdictions. For instance, Talbot County had the state's smallest share of single-parent closures (15.9%) and second-smallest percentage of work-eligible (34.1%) closures. In 15 jurisdictions, at least one third of closures were single-parent cases *and* more than half were work-eligible cases. Of these, Baltimore City had the largest share of single-parent (48.4%) closed cases as well as a large percentage (65.1%) of work-eligible closures.

The earnings designation described 9.7% of the state's closed cases. Like the single-parent designation, this percentage was

almost double that of open cases (4.5%). This difference is probably attributable to the increased likelihood of closure among earnings cases. As families included on these cases reported earnings while receiving TCA benefits, it is not hard to imagine some families were able to secure additional hours at work, a child support payment, or a slightly higher wage to put them over the income eligibility limit (James & Passarella, 2016).

The earnings designation also characterized a minority of closed cases in every jurisdiction. This designation described fewer than 7% of closures in Cecil (6.1%), Howard (6.8%), Queen Anne's (6.7%), and Worcester (6.7%) counties. It described exactly one in every 10 closed cases in Baltimore County (10.0%). At most, one in every five closures in Kent (19.7%) and Somerset (20.0%) counties was an earnings case.

Table 3. Caseload Designation: Statewide

	Closed Cases FFY 2015 (n=23,133)	Open Cases Oct. 2014 (n=23,107)
Work-Eligible Cases	60.4% (13,967)	38.5% (8,886)
Single-Parent Cases	42.4% (9,804)	27.0% (6,229)
Earnings	9.7% (2,242)	4.5% (1,029)
Short-Term Disabled	2.6% (607)	3.4% (782)
Legal Immigrant	0.8% (187)	0.6% (145)
Domestic Violence	1.0% (242)	0.8% (175)
Two-Parent Household	3.8% (885)	2.3% (526)
Work-Exempt Cases	39.6% (9,145)	61.5% (14,216)
Child-Only	17.5% (4,056)	32.2% (7,429)
Child Under One	7.6% (1,752)	8.6% (1,989)
Long-Term Disabled	11.6% (2,672)	16.2% (3,736)
Caring for Disabled Household Member	1.9% (443)	2.8% (643)
Needy Caretaker Relative	1.0% (222)	1.8% (419)

Note: Counts may not sum to actual sample size because of missing data for some variables. Valid percentages are reported.

Work-Exempt Cases

Work-exempt cases accounted for the remainder (39.6%) of the state's closures. This percentage was substantially less than that of the open cases (61.5%). This smaller share of closures may be because many work-exempt cases had fewer chances to close. As an example, child-only cases and those with an individual who is disabled for 12 months or longer receive a 12-month approval for TCA benefits (Maryland Department of Human Resources, 2008).

Work-exempt closures varied widely across the state. In FFY 2015, Somerset County had the smallest percentage (27.5%) of work-exempt closures. About half of all closures were not subject to work requirements in Harford (48.8%), Allegany (49.9%), and Kent (50.0%) counties. These cases numbered more than three in every five closed cases in Worcester (61.3%), Talbot (65.9%), and Caroline (67.2%) counties.

Statewide, the child-only designation was the most common of the work-exempt cases. This designation described 17.5% of the state's closures, which was substantially less than among open cases (32.2%). It also represented more than two out of every five of the state's work-exempt closures.

The distribution of child-only closures tended to vary with work-exempt closures among the jurisdictions. For instance, Baltimore City had the smallest share of child-only closures (12.4%) and the third-smallest percentage (34.9%) of work-exempt closures in the state. Caroline County had the largest shares of child-only (48.5%) and work-exempt (67.2%) closed cases.

Long-term disabled and child under one cases were the only other work-exempt designations associated with more than 5% of the state's closures. Long-term disabled cases accounted for 11.6% of the state's closed cases and 16.2% of its open ones. Similarly, child under one cases represented 7.6% of closures and 8.6% of cases open in October 2014.

Each of these two designations described a minority of jurisdictions' TCA closures. Long-term disabled cases accounted for just 4.4% (Somerset) to 21.6% (Allegany) of each jurisdiction's closures. Child under one cases accounted for an even smaller share of closures, varying from 3.4% in Carroll County to 17.3% in Worcester County.

Work-Exempt Cases

Cases in which the adult is not required to participate in a work-related activity

Child-only

Cases in which only children are included in the calculation of the cash assistance benefit

Child under one

Single parent with a child under the age of one

Long-term Disabled

A member of the assistance unit has a disability lasting 12 months or longer

Caring for a Disabled Family Member

Client is caring for a family member with a disability, such as a spouse or child

Needy Caretaker Relative

A non-parent relative who is caring for a child

(Maryland Department of Human Resources, 2015)

Case Closure Reasons

Cases close for a variety of reasons, such as a family's non-compliance with program rules, ineligibility, or upon request. These reasons are identified by a caseworker who documents the reason with a closure code in an administrative database. Though closure codes may not completely describe all the circumstances experienced by families who leave TCA, the assigned code provides some indication as to why a family stopped receiving cash assistance.

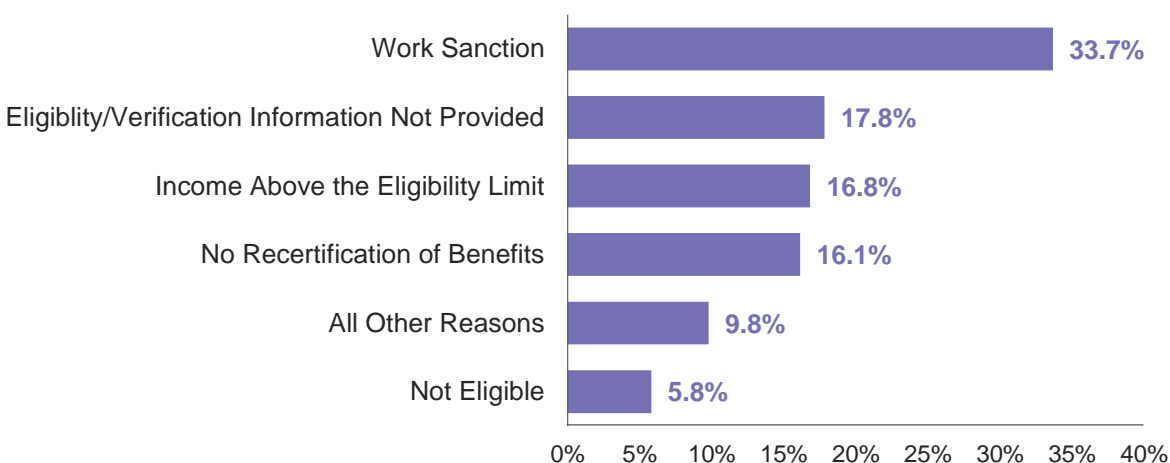
As shown in Figure 2, a work sanction was the most commonly documented closure reason in FFY 2015. This closure reason was ascribed to one in every three (33.7%) closed cases. A work sanction is imposed upon a case when a work-eligible adult fails to comply with the program's requirement to engage in work-related activities. In Maryland, this results in a full-family sanction, which means that all members of

the case receive no benefits until the adult fulfills this obligation.

The category of eligibility/verification information not provided supplied the reason for closure in nearly one out of every five (17.8%) closed cases. This category served as the second most commonly documented reason for closure. It indicates that a family had not provided the required eligibility or verification information to a caseworker in order to continue receiving benefits.

Income above the limit and no recertification of benefits were attributed to similar, slightly smaller shares of statewide closures. In FFY 2015, 16.8% of cases closed because the family's income exceeded the program's eligibility limit. An additional 16.1% of closures were included in the no recertification of benefits category, which means the family had not reapplied at the end of the eligibility period.

Figure 2. Most Common Case Closure Reasons: Statewide



Note: All Other Reasons includes cases that closed for reasons of residency, intentional violation, whereabouts unknown, death of a head of household or other member, and did not cooperate with quality control. Each of these reasons represents less than 5% of case closures. Valid percentages are reported.

These statewide trends may be explained by the prevalence of closure codes across the state. Among the jurisdictions, the most common reasons for case closure included work sanctions, income above the limit, eligibility/verification information not provided, and no recertification of benefits. Such trends are detailed in a supplemental appendix which identifies the three most documented closure reasons in each of the jurisdictions.

A work sanction was the most widely used reason for case closure among the jurisdictions. This reason described the largest share of closures in 15 jurisdictions. It represented the second and third most common reason for closure in an additional seven jurisdictions. In fact, only the two Eastern Shore counties of Caroline and Talbot did not have work sanctions listed as a top-three reason for case closure.

The distribution of work sanction closures tended to vary with that of work-eligible cases. Of all the jurisdictions, Talbot County had the smallest share of work sanction closures (4.5%) along with one of the smallest percentages of work-eligible closures (34.1%). In 13 jurisdictions, work sanction closures represented one quarter or more of closed cases and work-eligible closures accounted for more than half of the closures. This included Anne Arundel County, which maintained the largest share (40.4%) of work sanction closures along with 54.6% work-eligible closures in FFY 2015.

Income above the limit was the second-most common reason for closure among the jurisdictions. This reason described the largest percentage of closures in seven jurisdictions. It served as the second or third top reason for closure in 14 others.

The distribution of income above limit closures varied somewhat with that of earnings cases. Howard County maintained the third smallest percentage (14.5%) of income above limit closures along with the fourth lowest share (6.8%) of earnings closures. Kent County had the largest percentage of income above limit closed cases (40.9%) and the second-largest share (19.7%) of earnings closures.

The categories of eligibility/verification information not provided and no recertification of benefits rounded out jurisdictions' most common reasons for closure. Eligibility or verification information not provided was one of the top three reasons for closure in 11 jurisdictions. No recertification of benefits accounted for the first, second, or third greatest share of closures in five jurisdictions. Additionally, both categories were among the three top reasons for closure in Baltimore City and Howard and Washington counties.

Similar to the other reasons, the distribution of these closures varied across the state. The percentage of cases that closed because the family did not provide eligibility or verification information ranged from 1.9% (Somerset) to 27.6% (Howard). This range was slightly smaller than that observed among the no recertification closures. In FFY 2015, the share of no recertification of benefits closures ranged from a low 1.5% in Kent County to a high 30.5% in Washington County.

Closure Reasons among Work-Eligible Cases

Work-eligible cases include families who are subject to TCA's work participation requirement. The adults on these cases are required to participate in work-related activities for a specified period of time each week. Statewide trends in the reasons for these case closures are supplied in Figure 3.

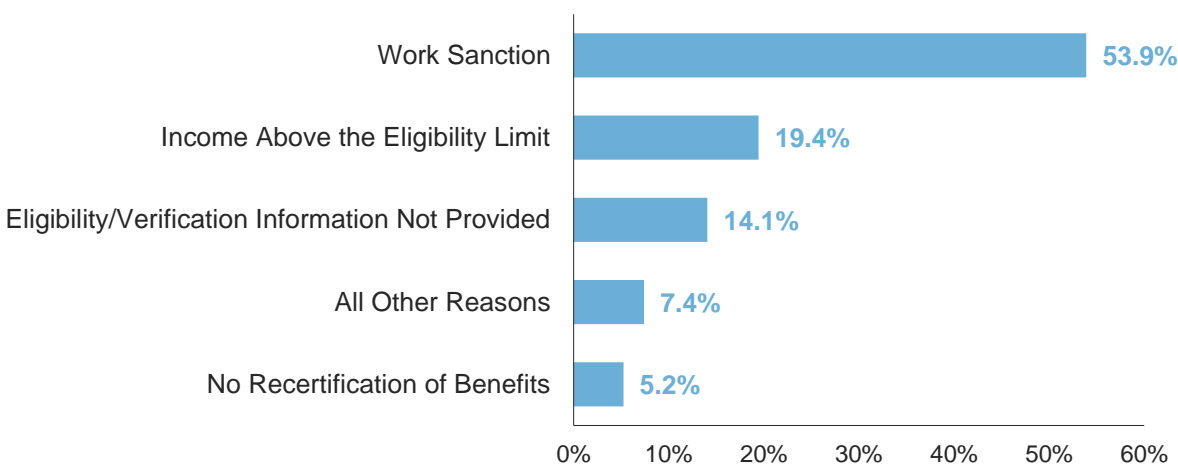
Among work-eligible cases, work sanctions represented the most commonly documented reason for closure. This reason described more than half (53.9%) of all work-eligible case closures. This is substantially higher than the percentage of all cases—work-eligible and work-exempt—that closed for a work sanction (33.7%).

Income above the eligibility limit was the second most common closure reason

among work-eligible cases. This relatively common occurrence is positive as it implies that these families have a source of income in excess of TCA's eligibility limit. However, it also indicates that families leaving for this reason are few in number. In FFY 2015, just one in every five (19.4%) work-eligible cases closed because the family's income exceeded the eligibility limit.

Due to the large percentage of work-sanctioned cases, other closure reasons were documented less frequently. Eligibility or verification information not provided described just one in every seven (14.1%) closures. No recertification of benefits characterized an additional one in every 20 closures (5.2%). The remaining reasons each described fewer than 5% of the work-eligible closed cases.

Figure 3. Closure Reasons among Work-Eligible Cases: Statewide



Note: All Other Reasons includes cases that closed for reasons of child support sanction, death of a head of household or other member, did not cooperate with quality control, intentional violation, not eligible, requested closure, residency, and whereabouts unknown. Each of these reasons represents less than 5% of work-eligible closures. Valid percentages are reported.

Closure Reasons among Work-Exempt Cases

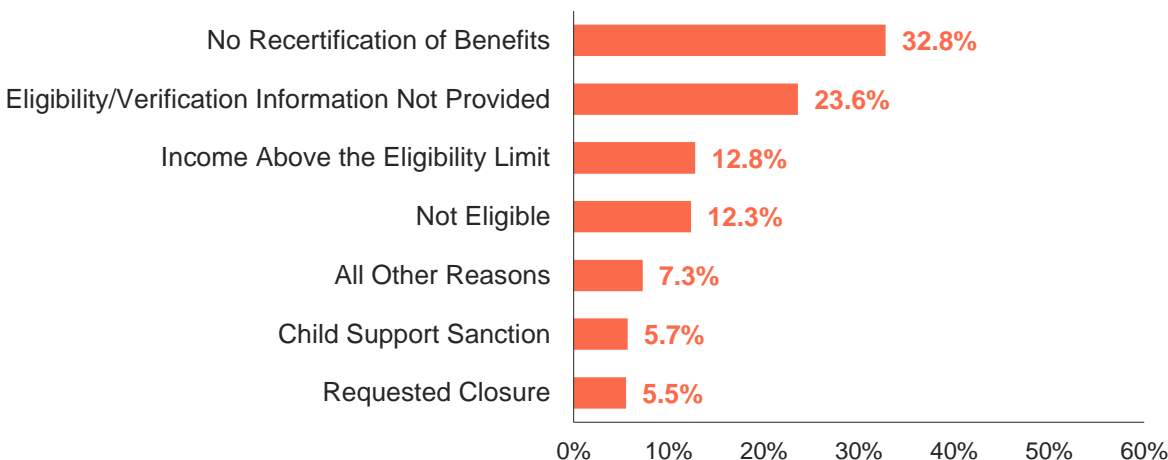
As work-exempt cases are not subject to work participation requirements, these cases tended to close for different reasons. Oftentimes, this was due to a lack of paperwork or ineligibility. Variation among the closure reasons assigned to these cases is displayed in Figure 4.

More than half of Maryland's work-exempt cases closed due to a lack of paperwork. In FFY 2015, one third (32.8%) of the state's work-exempt cases closed because the family had not submitted the paperwork to recertify for benefits. Another quarter (23.6%) of cases closed because the family had not provided the required documents necessary to verify eligibility or other information.

An additional quarter of work-exempt cases closed for two reasons related to ineligibility. Nearly one in every eight (12.8%) work-exempt cases closed because the family's income exceeded their TCA benefit amount. An additional 12.3% of cases closed for other ineligibility reasons, such as the eligible child moving out of the household.

Other reasons described just a small share of work-exempt closures in FFY 2015. Child support sanctions characterized about three in every 50 (5.7%) closures statewide. Requested closures described a similarly small share (5.5%) of these closed cases. The remaining reasons each accounted for fewer than 5% of the work-exempt closures.

Figure 4. Closure Reasons among Work-Exempt Cases: Statewide



Note: All Other Reasons includes cases that closed for reasons of death of head of household or other member, did not cooperate with quality control, intentional violation, residency, whereabouts unknown, and work sanctions. Each of these reasons represents less than 5% of work exempt closures. Valid percentages are reported.

Work Sanction Closures

The percentage of cases that closed for particular reasons varies from year to year. However, work sanctions have persisted as the most common closure reason in Maryland during the past eight years. This trend is important to document because such closures impact an entire family; all the members of a case receive no benefits until the work-eligible adults fulfill their obligation to participate in work activities.

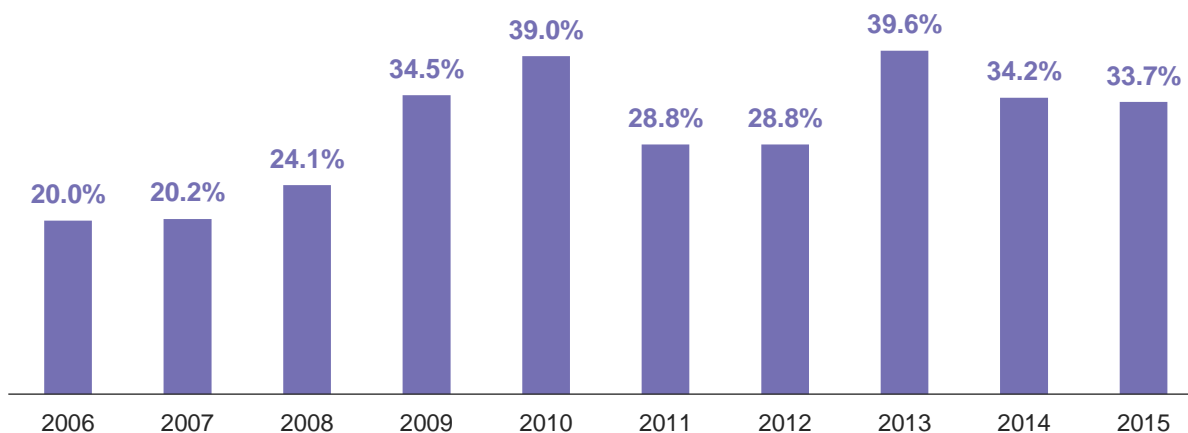
Over the last decade, Maryland has experienced four distinct changes in its work sanction rates which are presented in Figure 5. Beginning in FFY 2006, the state experienced a steady increase in its rate of work sanctions, totaling 39.0% in FFY 2010. During the next two years, the rate declined to include just 28.8% of closures. This was followed by a peak in the state's rate of work sanctions to 39.6% in FFY 2013. After that, work sanctions declined again to 33.7% in FFY 2015.

The changing rate of work sanctions may be partially explained by the implementation of the federal government's Deficit Reduction Act of 2005. This law made several modifications to states' TANF programs. It

also imposed new and more complicated requirements on the monitoring and reporting of clients' work participation. As state officials implemented these changes, many had to modify existing policies and procedures, which may have contributed to an increased rate of sanctions. In 2010, the U.S. Government Accountability Office found a majority of states experienced challenges in verifying clients' actual work hours and supervising those participating in work activities (Brown, 2010). Additionally, researchers found evidence to suggest that many adults were engaged in work activities, but these activities were not counted because of state reporting practices or difficulties documenting their participation (Derr & Brown, 2015).

Regardless of the reasons for the prevailing trend, patterns of full-family work sanctions are important to review as they have important short- and long-term implications for families. Researchers find that those who experience a full-family sanction may have significantly lower earnings for up to a year after leaving welfare, relative to families whose cases closed for other reasons (Fording, Schram, & Soss, 2013).

Figure 5. Work Sanctions by Federal Fiscal Year: Statewide



Note: Valid percentages are reported.

CONCLUSIONS

This edition of the *Caseload Exits at the Local Level* series identifies and describes prevailing trends in Maryland's TCA case closures between October 2014 and September 2015. Specifically, we examine changes in the number of the state's case closures over time and characterize the assistance units included on closed cases. We also describe variations in the caseload designations as well as reasons for closure.

Consistent with the last two years, the number of case closures continues to decline, with 6.4% fewer closures statewide than in federal fiscal year (FFY) 2014. The largest number and share of closures were concentrated in the five jurisdictions of Baltimore City, as well as, Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Montgomery, and Prince George's counties. In fact, 75% of the state's 23,133 case closures occurred in one of these five jurisdictions.

The characteristics of closures remained consistent with those of prior years. Most closed cases included families with just one or two child recipients. Usually, families' receipt of benefits was temporary. In FFY 2015, half of those who experienced a case closure received benefits for six or fewer consecutive months. This pattern of benefit receipt occurred across the state with 18 jurisdictions having a median TCA spell of just five or six months.

Likewise, a majority of closures were designated as work-eligible. This designation describes cases in which an adult was obligated to participate in work-related activities to receive assistance. It also described a majority of closed cases in all but eight jurisdictions.

Given the large percentage of work-eligible closures, work sanctions remained the most widely documented reason for case closure. In FFY 2015, work sanctions described about one third of closed cases. This reason accounted for the largest share of closures in 15 jurisdictions. In fact, only two counties did not have work sanctions as one of the three most common closure reasons.

On a positive note, income above limit closures increased slightly, relative to the previous year. This closure reason implies that a family secured an income in excess of the program's eligibility threshold. Oftentimes, it is indicative of the client's employment. In FFY 2015, about 17% of cases closed for this reason, up from 14% in FFY 2014.

However, the use of this closure reason was not uniform across the state. Just 12% of TCA cases closed in Baltimore City because the family had an income that exceeded the eligibility limit. This was substantially lower than that of nearby Baltimore County where 21% of cases closed for this reason. It suggests that families who experienced a case closure in Baltimore County may have been more easily able to secure a job, additional hours at work, or a slightly higher wage to put them over the eligibility limit, relative to those whose case closed in Baltimore City.

More details about the intra-state variations in case closure may be found in the supplemental appendix. This series of tables provides policymakers, program administrators, caseworkers, and nonprofit practitioners additional insight into the closures occurring across the state's 24 jurisdictions.

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Allegany County: 2014-2015	403 Case Closures
Percent Change in Case Closures from Previous Year	9.8% (+36)
Case Characteristics	
Recipient Children	
0 (expectant mother)	3.0%
1	48.6%
2	27.5%
3 or more	20.8%
Recipient Adults	
0 (children only)	17.6%
1	67.7%
2	14.6%
Months of TCA Receipt	
Average [Median] TCA Spell	9.4 [5]
Average [Median] in Previous 60	17.5 [13]
Caseload Designations	
Work-Eligible Cases	50.1%
Single-Parent Cases	27.8%
Earnings	7.7%
Two-Parent Household	10.2%
Other Work-Eligible Cases	4.5%
Work-Exempt Cases	49.9%
Child-Only	17.9%
Child Under One	7.9%
Long-Term Disabled	21.6%
Other Work-Exempt Cases	2.5%
Top Three Case Closure Reasons	
Work Sanction	23.8%
Income Above the Eligibility Limit	20.8%
Eligibility/Verification Information Not Provided	14.9%
Not Eligible	14.9%
Work Sanctions	
2014-2015	23.8%
2013-2014	22.9%
2012-2013	26.1%
Child Support Sanctions	
2014-2015	0.7%
2013-2014	0.5%
2012-2013	0.3%

Note: Some of the values may exclude missing data; valid percentages are reported.

Anne Arundel County: 2014-2015	1,381 Case Closures
Percent Change in Case Closures from Previous Year	0.7% (+10)
Case Characteristics	
Recipient Children	
0 (expectant mother)	3.8%
1	47.1%
2	27.2%
3 or more	21.8%
Recipient Adults	
0 (children only)	24.2%
1	70.2%
2	5.6%
Months of TCA Receipt	
Average [Median] TCA Spell	12.3 [6]
Average [Median] in Previous 60	19.6 [13]
Caseload Designations	
Work-Eligible Cases	54.6%
Single-Parent Cases	36.6%
Earnings	9.5%
Two-Parent Household	4.2%
Other Work-Eligible Cases	4.2%
Work-Exempt Cases	45.4%
Child-Only	24.1%
Child Under One	8.1%
Long-Term Disabled	11.0%
Other Work-Exempt Cases	2.3%
Top Three Case Closure Reasons	
Work Sanction	40.4%
No Recertification for Benefits	17.7%
Income Above the Eligibility Limit	15.1%
Work Sanctions	
2014-2015	40.4%
2013-2014	42.3%
2012-2013	43.1%
Child Support Sanctions	
2014-2015	3.3%
2013-2014	4.4%
2012-2013	4.4%

Note: Some of the values may exclude missing data; valid percentages are reported.

Baltimore City: 2014-2015	9,492 Case Closures
Percent Change in Case Closures from Previous Year	-9.8% (-1,026)
Case Characteristics	
Recipient Children	
0 (expectant mother)	3.2%
1	46.7%
2	28.4%
3 or more	21.7%
Recipient Adults	
0 (children only)	12.3%
1	84.3%
2	3.4%
Months of TCA Receipt	
Average [Median] TCA Spell	9.6 [5]
Average [Median] in Previous 60	26.9 [23]
Caseload Designations	
Work-Eligible Cases	65.1%
Single-Parent Cases	48.4%
Earnings	9.8%
Two-Parent Household	2.6%
Other Work-Eligible Cases	4.2%
Work-Exempt Cases	34.9%
Child-Only	12.4%
Child Under One	7.0%
Long-Term Disabled	12.1%
Other Work-Exempt Cases	3.4%
Top Three Case Closure Reasons	
Work Sanction	36.4%
Eligibility/Verification Information Not Provided	26.4%
No Recertification for Benefits	15.3%
Work Sanctions	
2014-2015	36.4%
2013-2014	33.6%
2012-2013	43.4%
Child Support Sanctions	
2014-2015	2.2%
2013-2014	4.9%
2012-2013	3.6%

Note: Some of the values may exclude missing data; valid percentages are reported.

Baltimore County 2014-2015	2,937 Case Closures
Percent Change in Case Closures from Previous Year	-3.1% (-95)
Case Characteristics	
Recipient Children	
0 (expectant mother)	2.8%
1	48.2%
2	28.2%
3 or more	20.7%
Recipient Adults	
0 (children only)	19.4%
1	75.6%
2	5.0%
Months of TCA Receipt	
Average [Median] TCA Spell	11.5 [6]
Average [Median] in Previous 60	23.3 [18]
Caseload Designations	
Work-Eligible Cases	61.8%
Single-Parent Cases	42.6%
Earnings	10.0%
Two-Parent Household	3.3%
Other Work-Eligible Cases	5.8%
Work-Exempt Cases	38.2%
Child-Only	19.4%
Child Under One	5.3%
Long-Term Disabled	10.9%
Other Work-Exempt Cases	2.7%
Top Three Case Closure Reasons	
Work Sanction	36.7%
No Recertification for Benefits	22.3%
Income Above the Eligibility Limit	21.3%
Work Sanctions	
2014-2015	36.7%
2013-2014	36.8%
2012-2013	44.6%
Child Support Sanctions	
2014-2015	3.5%
2013-2014	5.8%
2012-2013	2.9%

Note: Some of the values may exclude missing data; valid percentages are reported.

Calvert County: 2014-2015	117 Case Closures
Percent Change in Case Closures from Previous Year	4.5% (+5)
Case Characteristics	
Recipient Children	
0 (expectant mother)	1.7%
1	51.3%
2	31.6%
3 or more	15.4%
Recipient Adults	
0 (children only)	21.4%
1	73.5%
2	5.1%
Months of TCA Receipt	
Average [Median] TCA Spell	9.8 [6]
Average [Median] in Previous 60	15.8 [10]
Caseload Designations	
Work-Eligible Cases	58.1%
Single-Parent Cases	35.0%
Earnings	9.4%
Two-Parent Household	5.1%
Other Work-Eligible Cases	8.5%
Work-Exempt Cases	41.9%
Child-Only	21.4%
Child Under One	14.5%
Long-Term Disabled	5.1%
Other Work-Exempt Cases	0.9%
Top Three Case Closure Reasons	
Income Above the Eligibility Limit	30.8%
Work Sanction	17.1%
Eligibility/Verification Information Not Provided	14.5%
Work Sanctions	
2014-2015	17.1%
2013-2014	18.8%
2012-2013	19.7%
Child Support Sanctions	
2014-2015	3.4%
2013-2014	5.4%
2012-2013	10.6%

Note: Some of the values may exclude missing data; valid percentages are reported.

Caroline County: 2014-2015	134 Case Closures
Percent Change in Case Closures from Previous Year	-8.2% (-12)
Case Characteristics	
Recipient Children	
0 (expectant mother)	0.0%
1	52.2%
2	29.1%
3 or more	18.7%
Recipient Adults	
0 (children only)	48.5%
1	47.0%
2	4.5%
Months of TCA Receipt	
Average [Median] TCA Spell	14.3 [7]
Average [Median] in Previous 60	22.1 [16]
Caseload Designations	
Work-Eligible Cases	32.8%
Single-Parent Cases	20.9%
Earnings	9.7%
Two-Parent Household	2.2%
Other Work-Eligible Cases	0.0%
Work-Exempt Cases	67.2%
Child-Only	48.5%
Child Under One	7.5%
Long-Term Disabled	10.4%
Other Work-Exempt Cases	0.7%
Top Three Case Closure Reasons	
Income Above the Eligibility Limit	29.1%
Eligibility/Verification Information Not Provided	23.9%
Not Eligible	17.9%
Work Sanctions	
2014-2015	7.5%
2013-2014	6.8%
2012-2013	12.7%
Child Support Sanctions	
2014-2015	0.0%
2013-2014	0.7%
2012-2013	1.3%

Note: Some of the values may exclude missing data; valid percentages are reported.

Carroll County 2014-2015	234 Case Closures
Percent Change in Case Closures from Previous Year	41.0% (+68)
Case Characteristics	
Recipient Children	
0 (expectant mother)	2.1%
1	49.1%
2	30.8%
3 or more	17.9%
Recipient Adults	
0 (children only)	24.8%
1	66.7%
2	8.5%
Months of TCA Receipt	
Average [Median] TCA Spell	13.6 [5]
Average [Median] in Previous 60	18.3 [11]
Caseload Designations	
Work-Eligible Cases	52.1%
Single-Parent Cases	31.2%
Earnings	11.5%
Two-Parent Household	3.8%
Other Work-Eligible Cases	5.6%
Work-Exempt Cases	47.9%
Child-Only	24.8%
Child Under One	3.4%
Long-Term Disabled	18.4%
Other Work-Exempt Cases	1.3%
Top Three Case Closure Reasons	
Work Sanction	26.1%
Eligibility/Verification Information Not Provided	20.5%
Income Above the Eligibility Limit	19.7%
Work Sanctions	
2014-2015	26.1%
2013-2014	27.1%
2012-2013	27.4%
Child Support Sanctions	
2014-2015	0.0%
2013-2014	0.6%
2012-2013	0.5%

Note: Some of the values may exclude missing data; valid percentages are reported.

Cecil County: 2014-2015	511 Case Closures
Percent Change in Case Closures from Previous Year	-10.0% (-57)
Case Characteristics	
Recipient Children	
0 (expectant mother)	2.2%
1	46.4%
2	26.6%
3 or more	24.9%
Recipient Adults	
0 (children only)	22.5%
1	69.1%
2	8.4%
Months of TCA Receipt	
Average [Median] TCA Spell	11.7 [6]
Average [Median] in Previous 60	21.6 [16]
Caseload Designations	
Work-Eligible Cases	47.9%
Single-Parent Cases	34.2%
Earnings	6.1%
Two-Parent Household	4.5%
Other Work-Eligible Cases	3.1%
Work-Exempt Cases	52.1%
Child-Only	22.7%
Child Under One	7.8%
Long-Term Disabled	19.2%
Other Work-Exempt Cases	2.3%
Top Three Case Closure Reasons	
Work Sanction	32.7%
No Recertification for Benefits	17.0%
Income Above the Eligibility Limit	16.2%
Work Sanctions	
2014-2015	32.7%
2013-2014	33.3%
2012-2013	33.8%
Child Support Sanctions	
2014-2015	3.5%
2013-2014	3.5%
2012-2013	1.9%

Note: Some of the values may exclude missing data; valid percentages are reported.

Charles County: 2014-2015	410 Case Closures
Percent Change in Case Closures from Previous Year	-2.1% (-9)
Case Characteristics	
Recipient Children	
0 (expectant mother)	2.0%
1	45.6%
2	29.5%
3 or more	22.9%
Recipient Adults	
0 (children only)	17.3%
1	79.5%
2	3.2%
Months of TCA Receipt	
Average [Median] TCA Spell	9.0 [5]
Average [Median] in Previous 60	16.4 [11]
Caseload Designations	
Work-Eligible Cases	61.7%
Single-Parent Cases	42.7%
Earnings	12.0%
Two-Parent Household	2.0%
Other Work-Eligible Cases	5.1%
Work-Exempt Cases	38.3%
Child-Only	17.6%
Child Under One	11.0%
Long-Term Disabled	9.3%
Other Work-Exempt Cases	0.5%
Top Three Case Closure Reasons	
Work Sanction	27.8%
Income Above the Eligibility Limit	23.2%
Eligibility/Verification Information Not Provided	22.2%
Work Sanctions	
2014-2015	27.8%
2013-2014	32.0%
2012-2013	17.7%
Child Support Sanctions	
2014-2015	2.9%
2013-2014	5.7%
2012-2013	8.8%

Note: Some of the values may exclude missing data; valid percentages are reported.

Dorchester County: 2014-2015	220 Case Closures
Percent Change in Case Closures from Previous Year	0.0% (0)
Case Characteristics	
Recipient Children	
0 (expectant mother)	2.3%
1	44.1%
2	28.6%
3 or more	25.0%
Recipient Adults	
0 (children only)	21.8%
1	70.5%
2	7.7%
Months of TCA Receipt	
Average [Median] TCA Spell	13.3 [9]
Average [Median] in Previous 60	21.7 [16]
Caseload Designations	
Work-Eligible Cases	62.3%
Single-Parent Cases	40.9%
Earnings	12.3%
Two-Parent Household	6.8%
Other Work-Eligible Cases	2.3%
Work-Exempt Cases	37.7%
Child-Only	21.8%
Child Under One	5.5%
Long-Term Disabled	8.6%
Other Work-Exempt Cases	1.8%
Top Three Case Closure Reasons	
Work Sanction	33.2%
Income Above the Eligibility Limit	19.5%
Not Eligible	13.6%
Work Sanctions	
2014-2015	33.2%
2013-2014	40.0%
2012-2013	35.6%
Child Support Sanctions	
2014-2015	4.1%
2013-2014	3.6%
2012-2013	3.7%

Note: Some of the values may exclude missing data; valid percentages are reported.

Frederick County 2014-2015	374 Case Closures
Percent Change in Case Closures from Previous Year	-7.9% (-32)
Case Characteristics	
Recipient Children	
0 (expectant mother)	1.9%
1	41.0%
2	31.9%
3 or more	25.2%
Recipient Adults	
0 (children only)	19.8%
1	75.3%
2	4.8%
Months of TCA Receipt	
Average [Median] TCA Spell	10.0 [6]
Average [Median] in Previous 60	17.0 [11]
Caseload Designations	
Work-Eligible Cases	56.6%
Single-Parent Cases	35.1%
Earnings	11.8%
Two-Parent Household	2.7%
Other Work-Eligible Cases	7.0%
Work-Exempt Cases	43.4%
Child-Only	19.8%
Child Under One	9.4%
Long-Term Disabled	10.7%
Other Work-Exempt Cases	3.5%
Top Three Case Closure Reasons	
Income Above the Eligibility Limit	27.5%
Work Sanction	23.8%
Requested Closure	14.7%
Work Sanctions	
2014-2015	23.8%
2013-2014	28.3%
2012-2013	28.4%
Child Support Sanctions	
2014-2015	2.9%
2013-2014	6.4%
2012-2013	5.6%

Note: Some of the values may exclude missing data; valid percentages are reported.

Garrett County: 2014-2015	60 Case Closures
Percent Change in Case Closures from Previous Year	-18.9% (-14)
Case Characteristics	
Recipient Children	
0 (expectant mother)	3.3%
1	41.7%
2	31.7%
3 or more	23.3%
Recipient Adults	
0 (children only)	25.0%
1	53.3%
2	21.7%
Months of TCA Receipt	
Average [Median] TCA Spell	10.5 [5]
Average [Median] in Previous 60	16.2 [11]
Caseload Designations	
Work-Eligible Cases	45.0%
Single-Parent Cases	18.3%
Earnings	8.3%
Two-Parent Household	11.7%
Other Work-Eligible Cases	6.7%
Work-Exempt Cases	55.0%
Child-Only	25.0%
Child Under One	6.7%
Long-Term Disabled	20.0%
Other Work-Exempt Cases	3.3%
Top Three Case Closure Reasons	
Work Sanction	26.7%
Income Above the Eligibility Limit	21.7%
Eligibility/Verification Information Not Provided	16.7%
Work Sanctions	
2014-2015	26.7%
2013-2014	16.2%
2012-2013	13.0%
Child Support Sanctions	
2014-2015	1.7%
2013-2014	0.0%
2012-2013	0.0%

Note: Some of the values may exclude missing data; valid percentages are reported.

Harford County: 2014-2015	522 Case Closures
Percent Change in Case Closures from Previous Year	2.2% (+11)
Case Characteristics	
Recipient Children	
0 (expectant mother)	2.5%
1	47.7%
2	28.2%
3 or more	21.6%
Recipient Adults	
0 (children only)	23.4%
1	70.1%
2	6.5%
Months of TCA Receipt	
Average [Median] TCA Spell	10.5 [6]
Average [Median] in Previous 60	18.6 [12]
Caseload Designations	
Work-Eligible Cases	51.2%
Single-Parent Cases	34.4%
Earnings	8.8%
Two-Parent Household	4.2%
Other Work-Eligible Cases	3.8%
Work-Exempt Cases	48.8%
Child-Only	23.2%
Child Under One	7.9%
Long-Term Disabled	15.2%
Other Work-Exempt Cases	2.5%
Top Three Case Closure Reasons	
Income Above the Eligibility Limit	26.2%
Work Sanction	23.0%
Eligibility/Verification Information Not Provided	21.5%
Work Sanctions	
2014-2015	23.0%
2013-2014	26.8%
2012-2013	26.3%
Child Support Sanctions	
2014-2015	3.6%
2013-2014	2.3%
2012-2013	2.9%

Note: Some of the values may exclude missing data; valid percentages are reported.

Howard County: 2014-2015		442 Case Closures
Percent Change in Case Closures from Previous Year		-30.8% (-197)
Case Characteristics		
Recipient Children		
0 (expectant mother)		1.8%
1		43.4%
2		29.2%
3 or more		25.6%
Recipient Adults		
0 (children only)		18.6%
1		73.8%
2		7.7%
Months of TCA Receipt		
Average [Median] TCA Spell		9.9 [6]
Average [Median] in Previous 60		23.8 [18]
Caseload Designations		
Work-Eligible Cases		54.3%
Single-Parent Cases		33.7%
Earnings		6.8%
Two-Parent Household		5.2%
Other Work-Eligible Cases		8.6%
Work-Exempt Cases		45.7%
Child-Only		19.0%
Child Under One		6.1%
Long-Term Disabled		18.3%
Other Work-Exempt Cases		2.3%
Top Three Case Closure Reasons		
Work Sanction		28.7%
Eligibility/Verification Information Not Provided		27.6%
No Recertification for Benefits		16.1%
Work Sanctions		
2014-2015		28.7%
2013-2014		32.9%
2012-2013		32.3%
Child Support Sanctions		
2014-2015		1.6%
2013-2014		2.5%
2012-2013		0.4%

Note: Some of the values may exclude missing data; valid percentages are reported.

Kent County 2014-2015	66 Case Closures
Percent Change in Case Closures from Previous Year	-18.5% (-15)
Case Characteristics	
Recipient Children	
0 (expectant mother)	4.5%
1	40.9%
2	22.7%
3 or more	31.8%
Recipient Adults	
0 (children only)	16.7%
1	72.7%
2	10.6%
Months of TCA Receipt	
Average [Median] TCA Spell	10.5 [8]
Average [Median] in Previous 60	19.5 [17]
Caseload Designations	
Work-Eligible Cases	50.0%
Single-Parent Cases	21.2%
Earnings	19.7%
Two-Parent Household	9.1%
Other Work-Eligible Cases	0.0%
Work-Exempt Cases	50.0%
Child-Only	16.7%
Child Under One	9.1%
Long-Term Disabled	19.7%
Other Work-Exempt Cases	4.5%
Top Three Case Closure Reasons	
Income Above the Eligibility Limit	40.9%
Work Sanction	21.2%
Eligibility/Verification Information Not Provided	18.2%
Work Sanctions	
2014-2015	21.2%
2013-2014	22.2%
2012-2013	28.7%
Child Support Sanctions	
2014-2015	0.0%
2013-2014	1.2%
2012-2013	4.6%

Note: Some of the values may exclude missing data; valid percentages are reported.

Montgomery County: 2014-2015	1,273 Case Closures
Percent Change in Case Closures from Previous Year	7.2% (+86)
Case Characteristics	
Recipient Children	
0 (expectant mother)	2.0%
1	44.5%
2	29.9%
3 or more	23.6%
Recipient Adults	
0 (children only)	17.4%
1	71.2%
2	11.4%
Months of TCA Receipt	
Average [Median] TCA Spell	9.3 [5]
Average [Median] in Previous 60	16.5 [11]
Caseload Designations	
Work-Eligible Cases	63.8%
Single-Parent Cases	38.0%
Earnings	7.7%
Two-Parent Household	9.9%
Other Work-Eligible Cases	8.2%
Work-Exempt Cases	36.2%
Child-Only	17.1%
Child Under One	10.8%
Long-Term Disabled	6.0%
Other Work-Exempt Cases	2.4%
Top Three Case Closure Reasons	
Work Sanction	39.3%
Income Above the Eligibility Limit	23.3%
No Recertification for Benefits	9.3%
Work Sanctions	
2014-2015	39.3%
2013-2014	42.7%
2012-2013	37.4%
Child Support Sanctions	
2014-2015	7.7%
2013-2014	6.3%
2012-2013	6.6%

Note: Some of the values may exclude missing data; valid percentages are reported.

Prince George's County: 2014-2015	2,344 Case Closures
Percent Change in Case Closures from Previous Year	-11.5% (-306)
Case Characteristics	
Recipient Children	
0 (expectant mother)	2.5%
1	46.7%
2	28.1%
3 or more	22.7%
Recipient Adults	
0 (children only)	25.1%
1	71.1%
2	3.8%
Months of TCA Receipt	
Average [Median] TCA Spell	13.1 [7]
Average [Median] in Previous 60	22.9 [16]
Caseload Designations	
Work-Eligible Cases	56.0%
Single-Parent Cases	42.4%
Earnings	8.5%
Two-Parent Household	2.9%
Other Work-Eligible Cases	2.2%
Work-Exempt Cases	44.0%
Child-Only	25.3%
Child Under One	8.1%
Long-Term Disabled	8.0%
Other Work-Exempt Cases	2.7%
Top Three Case Closure Reasons	
Work Sanction	30.2%
No Recertification for Benefits	26.0%
Income Above the Eligibility Limit	15.9%
Work Sanctions	
2014-2015	30.2%
2013-2014	37.8%
2012-2013	44.0%
Child Support Sanctions	
2014-2015	7.0%
2013-2014	6.6%
2012-2013	6.5%

Note: Some of the values may exclude missing data; valid percentages are reported.

Queen Anne's County: 2014-2015	90 Case Closures
Percent Change in Case Closures from Previous Year	9.8% (+8)
Case Characteristics	
Recipient Children	
0 (expectant mother)	0.0%
1	51.1%
2	25.6%
3 or more	23.3%
Recipient Adults	
0 (children only)	28.9%
1	56.7%
2	14.4%
Months of TCA Receipt	
Average [Median] TCA Spell	12.0 [5]
Average [Median] in Previous 60	17.7 [10]
Caseload Designations	
Work-Eligible Cases	53.9%
Single-Parent Cases	33.7%
Earnings	6.7%
Two-Parent Household	10.1%
Other Work-Eligible Cases	3.4%
Work-Exempt Cases	46.1%
Child-Only	28.1%
Child Under One	4.5%
Long-Term Disabled	11.2%
Other Work-Exempt Cases	2.2%
Top Three Case Closure Reasons	
Income Above the Eligibility Limit	32.2%
Work Sanction	28.9%
Not Eligible	12.2%
Work Sanctions	
2014-2015	28.9%
2013-2014	28.0%
2012-2013	28.1%
Child Support Sanctions	
2014-2015	5.6%
2013-2014	8.5%
2012-2013	3.1%

Note: Some of the values may exclude missing data; valid percentages are reported.

St. Mary's County 2014-2015	494 Case Closures
Percent Change in Case Closures from Previous Year	6.9% (+32)
Case Characteristics	
Recipient Children	
0 (expectant mother)	3.2%
1	39.7%
2	27.5%
3 or more	29.6%
Recipient Adults	
0 (children only)	14.4%
1	74.1%
2	11.5%
Months of TCA Receipt	
Average [Median] TCA Spell	9.8 [6]
Average [Median] in Previous 60	19.3 [14]
Caseload Designations	
Work-Eligible Cases	62.5%
Single-Parent Cases	35.5%
Earnings	14.4%
Two-Parent Household	8.7%
Other Work-Eligible Cases	3.9%
Work-Exempt Cases	37.5%
Child-Only	14.4%
Child Under One	5.9%
Long-Term Disabled	15.2%
Other Work-Exempt Cases	2.0%
Top Three Case Closure Reasons	
Work Sanction	30.8%
Income Above the Eligibility Limit	22.9%
Eligibility/Verification Information Not Provided	16.2%
Work Sanctions	
2014-2015	30.8%
2013-2014	38.3%
2012-2013	31.4%
Child Support Sanctions	
2014-2015	2.8%
2013-2014	1.5%
2012-2013	1.9%

Note: Some of the values may exclude missing data; valid percentages are reported.

Somerset County: 2014-2015	161 Case Closures
Percent Change in Case Closures from Previous Year	18.4% (+25)
Case Characteristics	
Recipient Children	
0 (expectant mother)	1.2%
1	46.6%
2	23.6%
3 or more	28.6%
Recipient Adults	
0 (children only)	13.7%
1	80.1%
2	6.2%
Months of TCA Receipt	
Average [Median] TCA Spell	9.6 [6]
Average [Median] in Previous 60	20.9 [16]
Caseload Designations	
Work-Eligible Cases	72.5%
Single-Parent Cases	46.9%
Earnings	20.0%
Two-Parent Household	5.0%
Other Work-Eligible Cases	0.6%
Work-Exempt Cases	27.5%
Child-Only	13.1%
Child Under One	8.8%
Long-Term Disabled	4.4%
Other Work-Exempt Cases	1.3%
Top Three Case Closure Reasons	
Work Sanction	32.9%
Income Above the Eligibility Limit	29.2%
Requested Closure	18.6%
Work Sanctions	
2014-2015	32.9%
2013-2014	32.4%
2012-2013	36.0%
Child Support Sanctions	
2014-2015	1.2%
2013-2014	0.7%
2012-2013	1.4%

Note: Some of the values may exclude missing data; valid percentages are reported.

Talbot County: 2014-2015	44 Case Closures
Percent Change in Case Closures from Previous Year	-21.4% (-12)
Case Characteristics	
Recipient Children	
0 (expectant mother)	4.5%
1	50.0%
2	20.5%
3 or more	25.0%
Recipient Adults	
0 (children only)	43.2%
1	56.8%
2	0.0%
Months of TCA Receipt	
Average [Median] TCA Spell	15.0 [10]
Average [Median] in Previous 60	22.9 [19]
Caseload Designations	
Work-Eligible Cases	34.1%
Single-Parent Cases	15.9%
Earnings	11.4%
Two-Parent Household	0.0%
Other Work-Eligible Cases	6.8%
Work-Exempt Cases	65.9%
Child-Only	43.2%
Child Under One	4.5%
Long-Term Disabled	13.6%
Other Work-Exempt Cases	4.5%
Top Three Case Closure Reasons	
Eligibility/Verification Information Not Provided	25.0%
Income Above the Eligibility Limit	22.7%
Not Eligible	15.9%
Work Sanctions	
2014-2015	4.5%
2013-2014	3.6%
2012-2013	12.3%
Child Support Sanctions	
2014-2015	6.8%
2013-2014	0.0%
2012-2013	1.8%

Note: Some of the values may exclude missing data; valid percentages are reported.

Washington County: 2014-2015	656 Case Closures
Percent Change in Case Closures from Previous Year	8.4% (+51)
Case Characteristics	
Recipient Children	
0 (expectant mother)	1.8%
1	43.0%
2	27.1%
3 or more	28.0%
Recipient Adults	
0 (children only)	19.8%
1	76.1%
2	4.1%
Months of TCA Receipt	
Average [Median] TCA Spell	9.4 [5]
Average [Median] in Previous 60	18.7 [13]
Caseload Designations	
Work-Eligible Cases	42.7%
Single-Parent Cases	24.8%
Earnings	9.5%
Two-Parent Household	2.6%
Other Work-Eligible Cases	5.8%
Work-Exempt Cases	57.3%
Child-Only	20.0%
Child Under One	15.2%
Long-Term Disabled	18.0%
Other Work-Exempt Cases	4.1%
Top Three Case Closure Reasons	
No Recertification for Benefits	30.5%
Work Sanction	17.8%
Eligibility/Verification Information Not Provided	14.9%
Work Sanctions	
2014-2015	17.8%
2013-2014	19.0%
2012-2013	21.1%
Child Support Sanctions	
2014-2015	1.7%
2013-2014	1.0%
2012-2013	0.3%

Note: Some of the values may exclude missing data; valid percentages are reported.

Wicomico County 2014-2015	693 Case Closures
Percent Change in Case Closures from Previous Year	-2.8% (-20)
Case Characteristics	
Recipient Children	
0 (expectant mother)	2.9%
1	42.3%
2	31.0%
3 or more	23.8%
Recipient Adults	
0 (children only)	17.3%
1	76.8%
2	5.9%
Months of TCA Receipt	
Average [Median] TCA Spell	9.5 [5]
Average [Median] in Previous 60	20.8 [15]
Caseload Designations	
Work-Eligible Cases	67.1%
Single-Parent Cases	47.3%
Earnings	11.7%
Two-Parent Household	5.9%
Other Work-Eligible Cases	2.2%
Work-Exempt Cases	32.9%
Child-Only	17.5%
Child Under One	8.4%
Long-Term Disabled	4.6%
Other Work-Exempt Cases	2.5%
Top Three Case Closure Reasons	
Work Sanction	31.3%
Income Above the Eligibility Limit	22.1%
Eligibility/Verification Information Not Provided	14.4%
Work Sanctions	
2014-2015	31.3%
2013-2014	33.8%
2012-2013	30.0%
Child Support Sanctions	
2014-2015	4.5%
2013-2014	2.8%
2012-2013	1.8%

Note: Some of the values may exclude missing data; valid percentages are reported.

Worcester County: 2014-2015	75 Case Closures
Percent Change in Case Closures from Previous Year	4.2% (+3)
Case Characteristics	
Recipient Children	
0 (expectant mother)	0.0%
1	50.7%
2	37.3%
3 or more	12.0%
Recipient Adults	
0 (children only)	30.7%
1	64.0%
2	5.3%
Months of TCA Receipt	
Average [Median] TCA Spell	14.2 [8]
Average [Median] in Previous 60	20.3 [12]
Caseload Designations	
Work-Eligible Cases	38.7%
Single-Parent Cases	28.0%
Earnings	6.7%
Two-Parent Household	4.0%
Other Work-Eligible Cases	0.0%
Work-Exempt Cases	61.3%
Child-Only	30.7%
Child Under One	17.3%
Long-Term Disabled	12.0%
Other Work-Exempt Cases	1.3%
Top Three Case Closure Reasons	
Income Above the Eligibility Limit	29.3%
Not Eligible	16.0%
Work Sanction	16.0%
Work Sanctions	
2014-2015	16.0%
2013-2014	15.3%
2012-2013	13.0%
Child Support Sanctions	
2014-2015	8.0%
2013-2014	5.6%
2012-2013	11.7%

Note: Some of the values may exclude missing data; valid percentages are reported.



525 W. Redwood Street
Baltimore, MD 21201
410-706-2479
www.familywelfare.umaryland.edu