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CASELOAD EXITS AT THE LOCAL LEVEL: OCTOBER 2015 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 2016

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INTRODUCTION

Maryland's Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA) caseload has been declining for several years. Improving economic conditions, including a state unemployment rate that has remained at 4.2% since August 2016, may be a factor in this decline, as fewer families seek out welfare benefits to support themselves through crises such as job loss (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2017). With a smaller number of families receiving TCA benefits, the number of families exiting the program will necessarily decline as well.

Examining case closures provides valuable information on the types of cases that exit the TCA program as well as the reasons for their closures. Earlier studies have identified certain types of cases that are more likely to close than others. In particular, cases that are subject to work requirements are more likely to close because they can receive work sanctions for non-compliance. Work sanctioning has been the most common reason for case closures in Maryland for the last eight years.

Additionally, all TCA recipients are obligated to verify their continued eligibility for benefits by submitting up-to-date information on their income, household composition, and medical status. Cases can close when recipients fail to provide this information. Cases can also close when recipients' income increases, whether because of employment or because of income from child support payments or disability benefits. A large enough increase in income can render a case ineligible for TCA benefits. Ultimately, TCA is intended to provide short-term assistance that helps move recipients into paid employment, and some cases close because the program succeeds in doing exactly that.

This report, the latest in the *Caseload Exits at the Local Level* series, examines how often these scenarios occur among TCA closures. It documents closures during the most recent federal fiscal year, October 2015 to September 2016, examining cases' histories of TCA receipt, characteristics, and closure reasons. To give local program officials and policymakers more targeted information, this report also provides data for each of Maryland's 24 jurisdictions in an appendix.

METHODS

This report examines every TCA case closed in Maryland between October 2015 and September 2016, regardless of the length of closure (n=20,668). Cases may close multiple times during the year, but each case is only included in the sample once. For cases with multiple closures during the year, one closure is randomly selected for inclusion. Thus, the counts of closures in this report do not match the counts kept by Maryland's Department of Human Resources (DHR). Data on open TCA cases, included in some tables, is drawn from the population of cases receiving TCA for at least one month in state fiscal year 2016 (n=33,453) (Nicoli & Passarella, 2017).¹

Analyses in this report are based on data from the Client Automated Resources and Eligibility System (CARES), an administrative database maintained by the state of Maryland. CARES provides individual- and case-level program participation data for recipients of TCA. This report discusses findings for the state and the 24 jurisdictions in Maryland. State-level data tables and figures are included in the body of the text. Full jurisdictional data are provided in the appendix.

¹ Figure 1 displays data on open cases during federal fiscal years 2007 through 2016 taken from the DHR website: <http://dhr.maryland.gov/business-center/documents/>.

FINDINGS

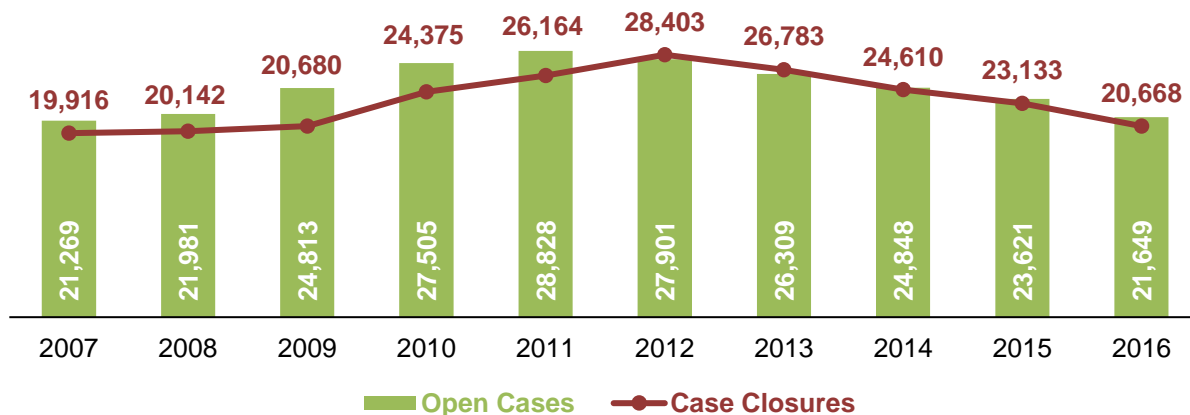
Case Closures over Time

Previous reports in this series have documented the steady decline of case closures over the last few years, and other reports have noted declines in the number of open cases during the same period. This year's report finds that both of these trends have continued. Figure 1 displays the number of case closures and the average number of open cases in each federal fiscal year from 2007 to 2016. In 2016, 20,668 cases closed at least once in Maryland, representing a decline of just over 10% (2,465 cases) from the previous year. This decline is the largest since closures began falling after 2012. The number of open cases was also smaller in 2016. At an average of 21,649 cases, the caseload in 2016 was 8% smaller than in 2015. The similarity in decline between

open cases and case closures emphasizes how closely linked these two measures are.

When looking at trends over a longer period of time, fluctuations in both the number of open and closed cases may be explained by the TCA caseload's response to overall economic conditions. The TCA caseload tends to rise when the economy is poor and fall when the economy improves. As an effect of the Great Recession, the unemployment rate in Maryland rose from 3.4% at the end of 2007 to a high of 7.8% in 2010, and was still 6.8% at the end of 2012 (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2017). As Figure 1 shows, both the number of open TCA cases and the number of case closures rose during this time period. As the unemployment rate in Maryland fell continuously after 2012, from 6.8% to 4.2% at the end of 2016, the number of open cases and case closures also fell.

Figure 1. Statewide Case Closures and Open Cases by Federal Fiscal Year: 2007 to 2016



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 2016 represents the months of October 2015 through September 2016. The annual number of open cases represents an average of the number of cases receiving TCA in each month of the given year and was obtained from the Maryland Department of Human Resources (DHR) Statistical Reports (<http://dhr.maryland.gov/business-center/documents/>).

The number of case closures in Maryland was about 10% smaller in 2016 than in 2015, but this decline was not evenly distributed across Maryland's 24 jurisdictions. The jurisdictional distribution of case closures in 2015 and 2016 and the percentage change and difference in closures between the two years is shown in Table 1. In 2016, 75% of case closures were located in the five jurisdictions with the largest populations: Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Prince George's County, Anne Arundel County, and Montgomery County. In all of these large jurisdictions, case closures declined from 2015, accounting for much of the decline in closures statewide. The largest declines among these five jurisdictions were in Baltimore County (-17.5%) and in Montgomery County (-15.8%). Caseloads in Baltimore City and Prince George's County declined by about 10%, and Anne Arundel

County had a relatively small decline (2.6%).

Smaller jurisdictions, while having less of an impact on the statewide closure rate, saw different—and sometimes more dramatic—changes in closures. Five smaller jurisdictions had declines of over 20% from 2015 (Charles, Carroll, Caroline, Queen Anne's, and Worcester Counties). In contrast, the number of closures either remained stable or increased in four smaller jurisdictions. The largest increase was in Garrett County, where 15 more case closures in 2016 than in 2015 equates to a percentage increase of 25%. While the numbers of cases in these jurisdictions are relatively small, and thus have less of an impact on measures of the state's closures, these increases and decreases in closures are meaningful within these smaller jurisdictions and for local program managers.

Table 1. Change in the Number of Case Closures by Jurisdiction
FFY 2015 to FFY 2016

	Total Closures FFY 2015	Total Closures FFY 2016	Percent Change & Difference in Closures
Baltimore City	9,492	8,571	-9.7% (-921)
Baltimore County	2,937	2,424	-17.5% (-513)
Prince George's County	2,344	2,119	-9.6% (-225)
Anne Arundel County	1,381	1,345	-2.6% (-36)
Montgomery County	1,273	1,072	-15.8% (-201)
Washington County	656	670	2.1% (14)
Wicomico County	693	575	-17.0% (-118)
Harford County	522	467	-10.5% (-55)
Cecil County	511	467	-8.6% (-44)
Howard County	442	443	0.2% (1)
St. Mary's County	494	437	-11.5% (-57)
Allegany County	403	348	-13.6% (-55)
Frederick County	374	334	-10.7% (-40)
Charles County	410	320	-22.0% (-90)
Dorchester County	220	230	4.5% (10)
Carroll County	234	183	-21.8% (-51)
Somerset County	161	153	-5.0% (-8)
Calvert County	117	110	-6.0% (-7)
Caroline County	134	98	-26.9% (-36)
Garrett County	60	75	25.0% (15)
Queen Anne's County	90	65	-27.8% (-25)
Kent County	66	64	-3.0% (-2)
Worcester Country	75	55	-26.7% (-20)
Talbot County	44	43	-2.3% (-1)
Maryland	23,133	20,668	-10.7% (-2,465)

Case Characteristics

Case characteristics, including the number of individuals on each case and the number of months of TCA receipt, are largely similar between open and closed cases, but there are some differences. Table 2 presents these case characteristics for case closures from federal fiscal year 2016, based on the month of closure, and for open cases from state fiscal year 2016, based on the first month of receipt in the year. Most cases, both open and closed, had one or two recipient children. Small percentages of open and closed cases had zero recipient children, being cases with expectant mothers or other special circumstances.² About 20% of both open and closed cases had three or more children receiving benefits. The most common number of recipient children in each of Maryland's 24 jurisdictions was one, but the percentage of closed cases with one child ranged from 39.1% of cases in Wicomico County to 60.0% in Worcester County.

Cases without an adult recipient, often referred to as child-only cases, represent a smaller percentage of closed cases compared to their percentage among open cases. In fact, there was nearly a 10-percentage point difference between closed and open cases without an adult recipient (18.8% vs. 27.8%). Since child-only cases do not have an adult recipient who is subject to work requirements, these cases may only close once the child ages out of eligibility, resulting in longer periods of benefit receipt (Hetling, Saunders, & Born, 2005).

The percentage of child-only case closures varies widely across jurisdictions, from 12.6% of case closures in St. Mary's County to 56.1% of case closures in Caroline County, a difference of over 40 percentage points. While 18.8% of case closures statewide were child-only, 17 jurisdictions had higher percentages of child-only case closures. It is likely the below-average percentage of child-only cases in Baltimore City (13.7%), which has the largest number of closures in Maryland, is affecting the statewide rate.

Case closures and open cases are also similar in the amounts of time they receive TCA benefits. Table 2 displays the average spell of continuous TCA receipt and the average number of months of receipt in the last five years for open and closed cases. Both open and closed cases received TCA benefits for an average spell of about 11 continuous months. Both also received TCA benefits for an average of just under two years out of the previous five.³

Months of TCA receipt for closed cases varies across jurisdictions. The average spell of TCA receipt generally ranged from nine to 13 consecutive months. Caroline County (16 months) and Prince George's County (15 months), however, had higher average months of consecutive receipt. There was a larger range of months of receipt in the previous five years, but most jurisdictions fell within 17 to 24 months. Three jurisdictions were outside of that range: Queen Anne's County (15 months), Baltimore City (27 months), and Howard County (26 months).

² Cases can also have zero children in the assistance unit if the only child(ren) in the household receives Supplemental Security Income, subsidized adoption payments, or foster care payments (DHR, 2008).

³ Median values for months of TCA receipt are lower for open cases than for closed cases in Table 2, a

finding that differs from previous reports in this series. This reflects a revised sampling method for open cases in SFY 2016. Namely, when sampled, open cases were selected at the first month of receipt in SFY 2016, while in previous samples all cases were selected in the same month of the year.

Table 2. Case Characteristics: Statewide

	Closed Cases FFY 2016 (n=20,668)	Open Cases SFY 2016 (n=33,453)
Recipient Children		
0 (expectant mother)	2.9% (605)	4.2% (1,389)
1	46.6% (9,635)	47.5% (15,884)
2	27.6% (5,698)	27.4% (9,151)
3 or more	22.9% (4,722)	21.0% (7,029)
Recipient Adults		
0 (children only)	18.8% (3,876)	27.8% (9,300)
1	76.5% (15,808)	68.2% (22,812)
2	4.7% (976)	4.0% (1,341)
Months of TCA Receipt		
Average [Median] TCA Spell	10.9 [6]	10.9 [3]
Average [Median] in Previous 60 Months	23.4 [18]	22.2 [16]

Note: Cases can have zero children in the assistance unit if the mother is pregnant with the only recipient child, or the only child(ren) in the household receives Supplemental Security Income, subsidized adoption payments, or foster care payments (DHR, 2008).

Caseload Designations

As a management tool, the Maryland Department of Human Resources assigns all cases a caseload designation based on individual case information. Through a hierarchical classification system, cases are assigned a single designation in a month even if multiple designations may apply. There are 10 different caseload designations described in the boxes below, but they can be generally grouped into two larger categories: work-eligible and work-exempt. Work-eligible cases include adults who are subject to work activity requirements, and work-exempt cases either do not require the adult to participate in work activities or do not have an adult recipient.

In October 2015, there was an adjustment to the caseload designation categories. Specifically, one of the work-exempt categories—the long-term disabled—was eliminated. Cases with that designation were reclassified into the next most appropriate category according to the hierarchical classification system. Our analyses show that over 80% of long-term disabled cases were transitioned into a work-eligible caseload designation (Nicoli & Passarella, 2017). Jurisdictions had different percentages of long-term disabled cases in their caseloads before the transition, so this change had varying effects on jurisdictions.

Table 3. Caseload Designations: Statewide

	Closed Cases FFY 2016
Work-Eligible Cases	69.5% (14,361)
Single-Parent Cases	50.5% (10,440)
Earnings	10.5% (2,164)
Two-Parent Household	3.6% (737)
Short-Term Disabled	2.5% (514)
Domestic Violence	1.5% (314)
Legal Immigrant	0.9% (192)
Work-Exempt Cases	30.5% (6,289)
Child-Only	18.8% (3,880)
Child Under One	7.6% (1,563)
Caring for Disabled HH Member	3.0% (614)
Needy Caretaker Relative	1.1% (232)

Note: We do not include a comparison to open cases in this year's report because of administrative changes that occurred in the middle of the sample period. Specifically, the long-term disabled designation was eliminated in October 2015. Counts may not sum to total due to missing data.

Work-Eligible Cases

Examining caseload designations statewide illustrates how the adjustment to long-term disabled cases may have affected the caseload. As Table 3 shows, closed cases in 2016 were more likely to be work-eligible than work-exempt. Work-eligible cases made up the majority (69.5%) of closed cases in the state, while work-exempt cases comprised 30.5% of closures. However, the percentage of cases that are work-eligible is nine percentage points higher than in the previous year (60.4%). This increase in work-eligible closures is likely due to the transition of most long-term disabled cases to one of the work-eligible designations. Therefore, as those long-term disabled cases close, they are now included in the percentage of work-eligible closures.

Differences in caseload designation among jurisdictions can provide information on how the TCA caseload differs from place to place within the state. Although seven in 10 case closures statewide were work-eligible,

there is substantial variation in work-eligible closures among the jurisdictions, ranging from 36.7% in Caroline County to 79.6% in St. Mary's County. However, even given this large range, work-eligible cases comprised less than half of all closures in only Caroline and Worcester Counties.

Just as the statewide percentage of work-eligible case closures increased by nine percentage points because of the reclassification of long-term disabled cases, some jurisdictions also saw substantial growth in work-eligible case closures between 2015 and 2016. For example, the percentage of work-eligible case closures increased considerably in two smaller jurisdictions: Talbot County (33 percentage points) and Kent County (28 percentage points).

Additionally, a total of 11 jurisdictions had at least a 10-percentage point increase in work-eligible case closures from 2015 to 2016, including two of the largest, Baltimore and Anne Arundel Counties. This is not

surprising as long-term disabled cases made up 10% or more of case closures in each of these 11 jurisdictions in 2015. It is likely that these closures are now captured in the work-eligible caseload.

However, not all jurisdictions had the same outcome. The percentage of work-eligible case closures declined in two jurisdictions, falling by about 3 percentage points in Queen Anne's and Calvert Counties. These jurisdictions both had very small numbers of long-term disabled case closures in 2015.

The majority of work-eligible cases were designated as single-parent, traditional TCA cases, making up half of all closures in the state. Slightly over 10% of closures were earnings cases, in which the adult recipient had some income, but not enough to disqualify them from receiving benefits. The remaining work-eligible designations each made up less than five percent of the closures in 2016: two-parent household (3.6%), short-term disabled (2.5%), domestic violence (1.5%), and legal immigrant (0.9%).

Exploring the individual designations within work-eligible case closures also demonstrates substantial jurisdictional variation. Although single-parent families are the most common work-eligible designation at the state level, associated with 50.5% of closed cases, the percentage of single-parent case closures ranged from 26.5% of closures in Caroline County to 56.8% of closures in Baltimore City. Despite this broad range, single-parent cases made up at least 40% of all closures in 18 jurisdictions in 2016.

Closures of earnings cases also varied across jurisdictions. In 11 jurisdictions, earnings cases made up less than 10% of closed cases. On the other hand, Talbot County had the largest percentage of earnings case closures among the jurisdictions (32.6%), and it is the only jurisdiction to have more earnings cases than single-parent cases (27.9%) among its case closures. However, Talbot County has

the smallest number of case closures in the state, which may explain these differences. Two other small counties, St. Mary's and Kent, also had high percentages of earnings case closures (21.3% and 25.0%, respectively). This may indicate that higher percentages of recipients in these small jurisdictions are leaving TCA for employment.

Closures of cases with other work-eligible designations were less common. In fact, some were not used at all in some jurisdictions. Two-parent household cases made up 10% or more of closures in Montgomery (10.0%), St. Mary's (10.3%), and Garrett (10.7%) Counties, but none of the closures in Charles and Talbot Counties. The percentage of the remaining work-eligible designations—short-term disabled, domestic violence, and legal immigrant—did not exceed 10% of any jurisdiction's closures. In several jurisdictions, no closed cases had these designations.

Work-Eligible Cases

Cases in which an adult is subject to work participation requirements

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.

Two facts may explain the absence of certain work-eligible caseload designations in the closed cases of certain jurisdictions. First, these designations are rarely used in the TCA caseload. Among open cases in 2016, two-parent, short-term disabled, domestic violence, and legal immigrant cases together made up just 7.9% of all cases (Nicoli & Passarella, 2017). Second, some cases with these designations may be less likely to close than single-parent cases due to differences in work participation requirements. For example, short-term disabled and domestic violence cases may be granted good cause waivers exempting them from participating in work activities.

Work-Exempt Cases

Work-exempt cases made up less than one third (30.5%) of all closures. The largest percentage of work-exempt closures in 2016 were child-only cases (18.8%), which are cases that do not include an adult recipient. Other work-exempt cases include an adult who is caring for an infant or disabled household member, or an adult who is a needy caretaker relative. Cases with the child under one designation accounted for 7.6% of closures, while cases designated as caring for a disabled household member (3.0%) and needy caretaker relative (1.1%) each made up less than five percent of closures.

Although work-eligible cases are less common statewide, there is substantial variation across the state. For example, in Baltimore City, 25.8% of closed cases were work-exempt in 2016. However, in two jurisdictions the reverse is true. Work-exempt cases comprised 54.5% of case closures in Worcester County and 63.3% of closures in Caroline County. Work-exempt cases made up one third or more of closures in 12 additional jurisdictions, including three of the five largest: Montgomery, Anne Arundel, and Prince George's Counties.

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

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

The most common work-exempt caseload designation in every jurisdiction is child-only cases. These cases made up 20% or more of closures in 16 jurisdictions. Additionally, child-only cases were the most common caseload designation among all closed cases in Caroline (56.1%), Worcester (43.6%), and Calvert (38.2%) Counties.

The remaining work-exempt designations were rarely used or absent from closures in several jurisdictions. Child under one case closures were present in all jurisdictions, but they did not exceed 14% of any jurisdiction's closures. Cases in which the recipient was caring for a disabled household member did not exceed 5% of closures in any jurisdiction except Garrett County (10.7%) and were absent in three jurisdictions. Cases in which the recipient was a needy caretaker relative did not exceed 3% of closures in any jurisdiction and were also absent from closures in three jurisdictions. The infrequency of these three caseload designations is expected given that they represent less than 15% of open cases in 2016.

Case Closure Reasons

A TCA case can close for a variety of reasons, such as sanctions, missing paperwork, or upon the recipient's request. When a case closes, a caseworker assigns a closure code to the case in the program's administrative database. A closure code can provide a general, but not fully explanatory, description of why a particular recipient stopped receiving benefits. For example, a closed case with a work sanction indicates that the recipient did not comply with work activity requirements, though it says nothing about why that non-compliance occurred or whether the recipient later comes into compliance. A closure due to eligibility or verification information not provided suggests that a case closed because of missing paperwork, but the code does not state how much information was missing or why. A closure due to income above the eligibility limit indicates that the recipient's income increased, but the code does not record the source of increased income, which may be from employment, from Supplemental Security Income (SSI), or from child support benefits.⁴ Regardless, closure codes provide some relevant information about the reasons cases exit the program.

There are five commonly used case closure reasons among cases that closed in 2016. Figure 2 displays the percentage of closed cases associated with each, along with a category combining less-commonly used closure reasons. In 2016, the most common closure code (29.9%) was a work sanction, but its occurrence declined from 33.7% in 2015 (James & Passarella, 2016a). A work sanction is imposed when a recipient does not comply with work participation requirements. Longer work sanctions can be associated with more negative outcomes for the recipient. Previous research has shown that recipients who receive 30-day work sanctions in Maryland are less likely to have finished high school, more likely to

return to assistance, and have lower earnings than recipients with 1-day or 10-day work sanctions (Nicoli, 2016). However, work-sanctioned recipients can reinstate their benefits if they come into compliance with work requirements, sometimes without the loss of a full month of benefits or having to reapply.

TCA recipients are also required to provide eligibility and verification documentation to their caseworkers. If recipients do not provide this information, their cases close. Closures due to eligibility or verification information not being provided were the second most common reason in 2016, making up 19.8% of case closures. This represents a two-percentage point increase in the use of this closure code from the previous year (17.8%).

Other cases close because a recipient's income increases or because recipients do not recertify their benefit eligibility. Closures due to the recipient having income that placed the family above the eligibility limit for receiving benefits made up 17.5% of all closures, and 14.6% of closures were due to recipients not recertifying their eligibility for benefits. Cases that close for these reasons can have very different post-TCA paths. Cases that close because of income above limit are substantially less likely to return to TCA than other case closures, while a majority of cases that close due to no recertification return to welfare within 30 days of closure after they resubmit an application (James & Passarella, 2016b; Passarella, 2015).

The use of particular case closure reasons can vary widely between jurisdictions. Typically, these differences are a reflection of the caseloads in each jurisdiction. For example, jurisdictions with higher percentages of work-eligible cases will necessarily have more instances of work sanctions. For more information on how this varies by jurisdiction, the appendix to this

⁴ Secondary closure codes, which we do not examine here, can capture SSI and child support benefit amounts.

report lists the three most common closure reasons for each jurisdiction.

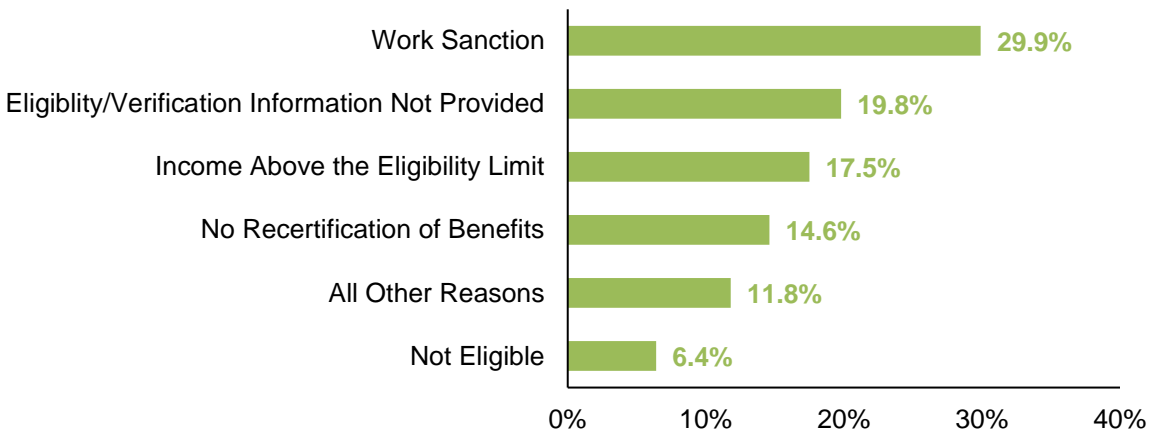
Work sanctions are among the three most common closure reasons in 20 of Maryland's 24 jurisdictions and are the most common closure reason in 12. Of the 12 jurisdictions where work sanctions were most common, work-eligible cases made up at least 60% of closed cases. However, of the four jurisdictions in which work sanctions were not among the three most common case closure reasons, work-eligible cases comprised over 60% of closed cases in only one (Washington County). Thus, the prevalence of work sanctions as a closure reason is related to the percentage of closed cases that are work-eligible.

The second, third, and fourth most common case closure reasons statewide—eligibility or verification information not provided, income above the eligibility limit, and no recertification of benefits—were among the

top three case closure reasons in most jurisdictions. In 22 jurisdictions, income above the eligibility limit was one of the three most common case closure reasons and was the most common reason in eight jurisdictions. Additionally, earnings cases—those with employment earnings while receiving TCA benefits—were above the statewide average (10.5%) in six jurisdictions where income above the eligibility limit was the most common closure reason. This suggests that the adults on these cases began to earn more through increased hours or higher wages.

In 16 jurisdictions, eligibility or verification information not provided was among the top three closure reasons, but it was the most common reason in only Carroll and Charles Counties. Cases that closed due to no recertification of benefits were among the top three case closure reasons in 11 jurisdictions and the most common or tied for most common in three: Prince George's, Howard, and Washington Counties.

Figure 2. Case Closure Reasons: Statewide



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

Work-Eligible Case Closures

Examining case closure reasons for work-eligible and work-exempt cases separately highlights how closure reasons are used differently within these two categories. Figure 3 shows case closure reasons for all work-eligible cases. The most common case closure reason for work-eligible cases was work sanctions (42.5%). This is not surprising, since work-eligible cases are required to participate in work activities and can be sanctioned for noncompliance.

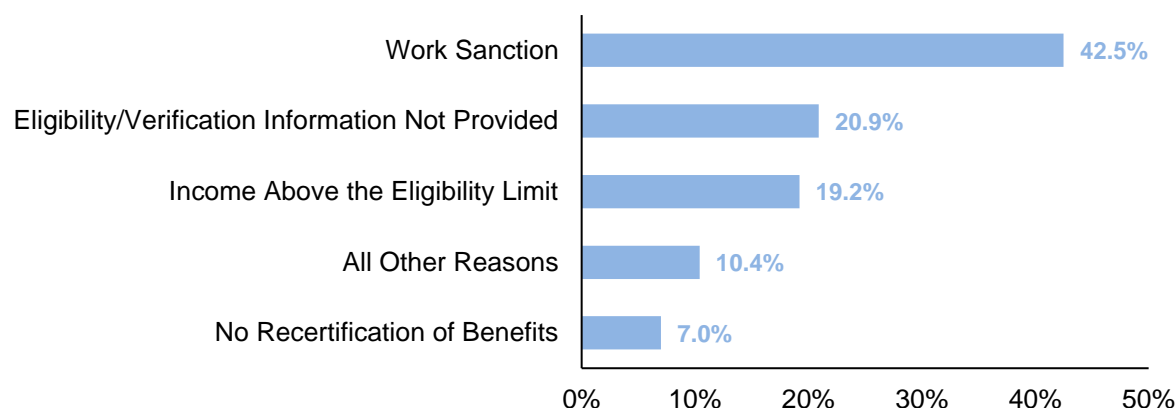
While work sanctions were by far the most common closure reason among work-eligible cases in 2016, the use of this closure code has actually fallen by 11 percentage points from the previous year (53.9%). This may be a consequence of the elimination of the long-term disabled caseload designation. Over 80% of long-term disabled cases were moved into a work-eligible caseload designation, but not all of them may have been required to participate in work activities (Nicoli & Passarella, 2017). Instead, they may have been required to submit applications for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) as a condition for receiving TCA benefits.

It is unlikely that these cases would be closed due to a work sanction, but it is plausible that former long-term disabled cases close because of missing paperwork or failing to recertify eligibility for benefits. In

2015, two in every three long-term disabled cases were closed with one of these two reasons. Figure 3 shows that 20.9% of work-eligible cases closed because eligibility or verification information was not provided, and 7.0% closed due to no recertification of benefits. Both of these closure reasons were used in higher percentages of closures in 2016 than in 2015. The increase was about two percentage points for cases closing because of no recertification of benefits. However, closures due to eligibility or verification information not provided increased by seven percentage points, moving from the third most common closure reason for work-eligible cases to the second most common closure reason. Given this information, it is very likely that the increase in closures due to eligibility or verification information not provided is the result of the influx of formerly long-term disabled cases into the work-eligible caseload.

The final category of closure reasons among work-eligible cases—income above the eligibility limit—remained stable between 2015 and 2016. In both years, about one in five work-eligible cases closed due to increases in income. Even though the percentage of closures remained stable, income above the eligibility limit moved from the second most common reason in 2015 to the third most common in 2016. This drop was due to the large increase in closures for missing eligibility and verification information.

Figure 3. Case Closure Reasons: Work-Eligible Cases



Note: The All Other Reasons category includes cases that closed due to 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.

Work-Exempt Case Closures

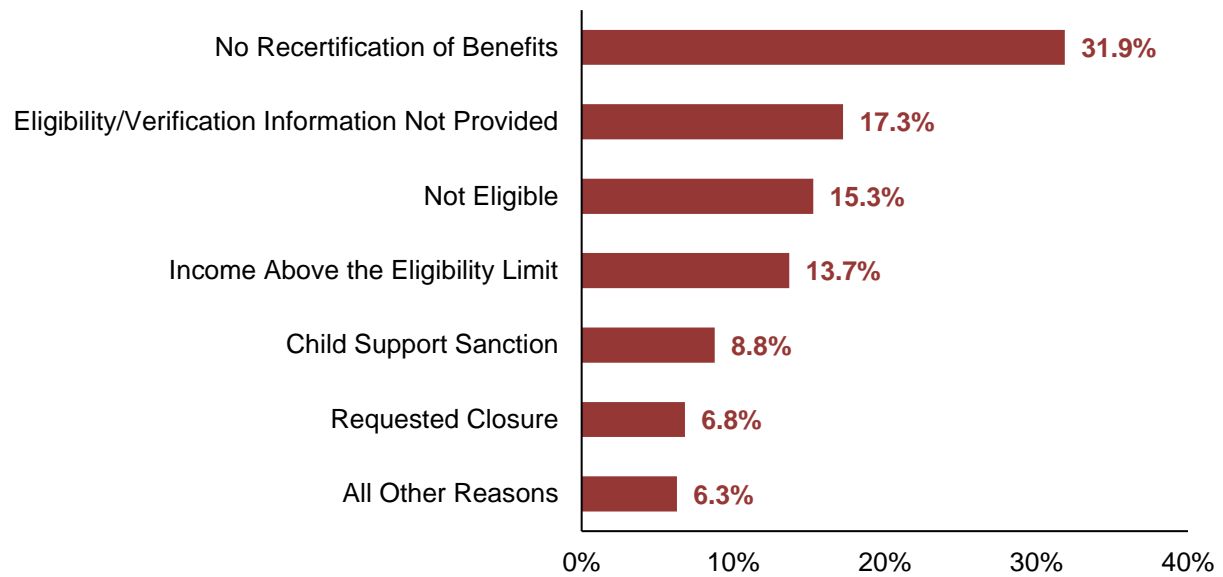
Work-exempt cases are not subject to work participation requirements and are not work sanctioned, so these cases necessarily close for different reasons than work-eligible cases. Figure 4 displays case closure reasons for work-exempt cases. The highest percentage of work-exempt cases closed due to no recertification of benefits (31.9%). This has changed little from the previous year, when 32.8% of work-exempt cases closed for that reason. The percentage of closures due to eligibility or verification information not being provided (17.3%) fell by 6.3 percentage points from 2015.

This decline may be a result of the removal of long-term disabled cases from the work-exempt caseload. In 2015, two in five long-term disabled cases closed due to eligibility or verification information not being provided. Reclassifying most long-term disabled cases as work-eligible likely caused the percentage of work-exempt cases closing for this reason to decline.

As more than half of work-exempt cases closed because of no recertification of benefits or the lack of eligibility or verification information, none of the remaining closure reasons exceeded 15% of work-exempt closures. Cases that closed because the recipient was no longer eligible for benefits made up 15.3% of work-exempt cases, an increase of three percentage points over the previous year. Cases that closed due to income placing the recipient above the eligibility limit for benefits made up 13.7% of work-exempt cases, an increase of less than one percentage point.

Non-cooperation with the child support program accounted for 8.8% of work-exempt cases, an increase from 5.7% in 2015, suggesting that jurisdictions may be implementing this sanction more often. Cases that requested closure made up 6.8% of closures, a minor increase from 5.5% in 2015. Finally, cases that closed for other reasons accounted for 6.3% of work-exempt case closures.

Figure 4. Case Closure Reasons: Work-Exempt Cases



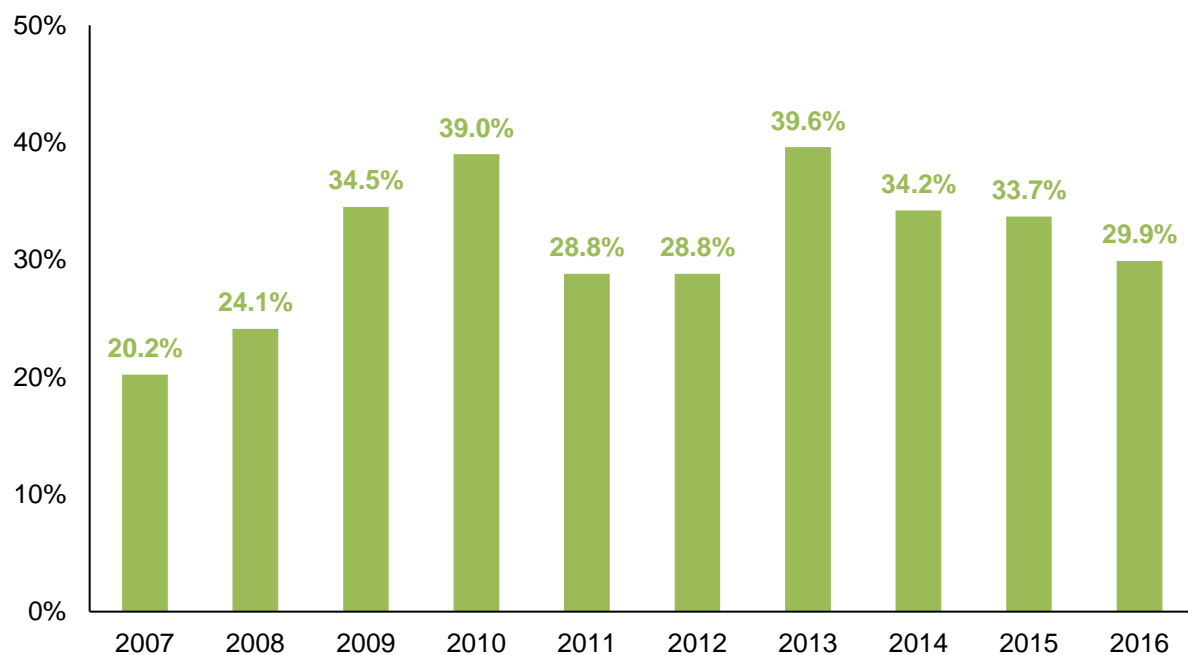
Note: The All Other Reasons category includes cases that closed due to death of head of household or other member, did not cooperate with quality control, intentional violation, residency, whereabouts unknown, and work sanctions. Each of these reasons represents less than 5% of work exempt closures.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

Work Sanctions

Work sanctions were the most common case closure reason in 2016 and comprised over 40% of work-eligible case closures. Additionally, work sanctions have been the most commonly used case closure reason for nine consecutive years. We track the use of work sanctions over time because of how frequently they are used and because they often have a large impact on the families who receive them. Work sanctions in Maryland are full-family sanctions that result in the complete removal of benefits. Research shows that leavers who are work sanctioned are less likely to be working after exit than other leavers (Wu, Cancian, & Wallace, 2014).

Although work sanctions are the most common closure reason statewide, the use of work sanctions has declined for three consecutive years, as shown in Figure 5. About 30% of cases closed due to a work sanction in 2016, compared with 33.7% of cases in 2015. The current use of work sanctions has fallen to nearly the same level as in 2011 and 2012. This trend, therefore, may also be driven by the decline in the number of cases subject to a work sanction.

Figure 5. Work Sanctions by Year: Statewide



Note: Valid percentages are reported.

CONCLUSIONS

The number of case closures in Maryland continued to fall in federal fiscal year 2016, marking four consecutive years of decline. This year had the largest decline of the four, with just over 10% fewer cases from the previous year. While the number of case closures rose in a handful of smaller jurisdictions, declines in Maryland's five largest jurisdictions, which contained 75% of the state's closures, more than made up the difference.

Closed cases strongly resembled open cases in terms of case characteristics. Most open and closed cases in 2016 had one or two recipient children and one recipient adult. However, child-only cases were more prevalent among open cases, and the percentage of child-only case closures varies widely across jurisdictions, with 17 jurisdictions above the state average of 18.8%. Both open and closed cases had continuous spells of TCA receipt for an average of 11 months, and both received just under two years of benefits in the previous five years.

The majority (69.5%) of closed cases were classified as work-eligible in 2016, while the remainder (30.5%) were classified as work-exempt. The percentage of work-eligible closures increased by nine percentage points from 2015 to 2016, likely driven by the reclassification of most long-term disabled cases from a work-exempt to a work-eligible caseload designation. Of the 24 jurisdictions, 11 saw substantial growth in work-eligible closures after this reclassification.

Not only did the work-eligible caseload rise, there was also a shift in the reasons for case closures among these cases. Closures due to a lack of eligibility or verification information increased by seven percentage points from the previous year. This became the second most common closure reason for work-eligible closures in 2016, moving up from third in 2015. Additionally, the

percentage of work-eligible cases closed due to work sanctions declined from 53.9% in 2015 to 42.5% in 2016, but they remained the most common reason for closure among work-eligible cases.

Moreover, work sanctions continue to be the most common closure reasons among all cases for the ninth consecutive year. Work sanctions are the most common closure reason in 12 jurisdictions and one of the top three case closure reasons in another eight jurisdictions. However, the percentage of closed cases that received a full-family work sanction has been declining for three years and fell from 33.7% in 2015 to 29.9% of closures in 2016.

It is unclear whether the decline in work sanctions, particularly among work-eligible case closures, is due to the transition of long-term disabled cases or a continuation of a prior trend. Further study of long-term disabled cases may provide more insight into these cases' outcomes and their potential impact on the work-eligible caseload. It may also be prudent to examine outreach and case management strategies to expand the capacity for program managers to support the clients on these cases.

Because there are variations in the TCA caseload among Maryland's jurisdictions, we provide an appendix with detailed data on each of the 24 jurisdictions. Each profile contains data on case characteristics, caseload designations, and closure reasons, providing local program administrations with more information on their specific jurisdictional areas.

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APPENDIX: JURISDICTIONAL TABLES

Allegany County: 2015-2016	348 Case Closures
Percent Change in Case Closures from Previous Year	-13.6% (-55)
Case Characteristics	
Recipient Children	
(expectant mother)	3.2%
1	46.3%
2	30.7%
3 or more	19.8%
Recipient Adults	
0 (children only)	20.4%
1	67.8%
2	11.8%
Months of TCA Receipt	
Average [Median] TCA Spell	9.8 [5]
Average [Median] in Previous 60	19.3 [14]
Caseload Designations	
Work-Eligible Cases	70.7%
Single-Parent Cases	49.7%
Earnings	8.9%
Two-Parent Household	9.2%
Other Work-Eligible Cases	2.9%
Work-Exempt Cases	29.3%
Child-Only	20.4%
Child Under One	7.8%
Other Work-Exempt Cases	1.1%
Top Three Case Closure Reasons	
Work Sanction	21.3%
Requested Closure	20.4%
Eligibility/Verification Information Not Provided	17.2%
Work Sanctions	
2015-2016	21.3%
2014-2015	23.8%
2013-2014	22.9%
Child Support Sanctions	
2015-2016	0.6%
2014-2015	0.7%
2013-2014	0.5%

Anne Arundel County: 2015-2016	1,345 Case Closures
Percent Change in Case Closures from Previous Year	-2.6% (-36)
Case Characteristics	
Recipient Children	
0 (expectant mother)	3.9%
1	49.0%
2	24.5%
3 or more	22.5%
Recipient Adults	
0 (children only)	23.0%
1	72.6%
2	4.4%
Months of TCA Receipt	
Average [Median] TCA Spell	10.6 [6]
Average [Median] in Previous 60	19.0 [13]
Caseload Designations	
Work-Eligible Cases	65.4%
Single-Parent Cases	47.6%
Earnings	8.7%
Two-Parent Household	2.7%
Other Work-Eligible Cases	6.3%
Work-Exempt Cases	34.6%
Child-Only	23.4%
Child Under One	6.2%
Other Work-Exempt Cases	5.0%
Top Three Case Closure Reasons	
Work Sanction	38.6%
Income Above the Eligibility Limit	17.2%
No Recertification for Benefits	13.8%
Work Sanctions	
2015-2016	38.6%
2014-2015	40.4%
2013-2014	42.3%
Child Support Sanctions	
2015-2016	6.3%
2014-2015	3.3%
2013-2014	4.4%

Baltimore City: 2015-2016	8,571 Case Closures
Percent Change in Case Closures from Previous Year	-9.7% (-921)
Case Characteristics	
Recipient Children	
0 (expectant mother)	3.4%
1	46.7%
2	27.5%
3 or more	22.4%
Recipient Adults	
0 (children only)	13.7%
1	83.3%
2	3.0%
Months of TCA Receipt	
Average [Median] TCA Spell	10.1 [5]
Average [Median] in Previous 60	26.7 [23]
Caseload Designations	
Work-Eligible Cases	74.2%
Single-Parent Cases	56.8%
Earnings	10.6%
Two-Parent Household	2.2%
Other Work-Eligible Cases	4.6%
Work-Exempt Cases	25.8%
Child-Only	13.8%
Child Under One	7.5%
Other Work-Exempt Cases	4.6%
Top Three Case Closure Reasons	
Work Sanction	32.2%
Eligibility/Verification Information Not Provided	28.4%
Income Above the Eligibility Limit	12.9%
Work Sanctions	
2015-2016	32.2%
2014-2015	36.4%
2013-2014	33.6%
Child Support Sanctions	
2015-2016	5.6%
2014-2015	2.2%
2013-2014	4.9%

Baltimore County 2015-2016	2,424 Case Closures
Percent Change in Case Closures from Previous Year	-17.5% (-513)
Case Characteristics	
Recipient Children	
0 (expectant mother)	3.7%
1	48.5%
2	27.5%
3 or more	20.3%
Recipient Adults	
0 (children only)	18.5%
1	76.4%
2	5.1%
Months of TCA Receipt	
Average [Median] TCA Spell	11.2 [6]
Average [Median] in Previous 60	22.8 [17]
Caseload Designations	
Work-Eligible Cases	72.0%
Single-Parent Cases	51.5%
Earnings	11.3%
Two-Parent Household	3.6%
Other Work-Eligible Cases	5.6%
Work-Exempt Cases	28.0%
Child-Only	18.5%
Child Under One	5.3%
Other Work-Exempt Cases	4.2%
Top Three Case Closure Reasons	
Work Sanction	34.5%
Income Above the Eligibility Limit	26.2%
No Recertification for Benefits	14.7%
Work Sanctions	
2015-2016	34.5%
2014-2015	36.7%
2013-2014	36.8%
Child Support Sanctions	
2015-2016	2.8%
2014-2015	3.5%
2013-2014	5.8%

Calvert County: 2015-2016	110 Case Closures
Percent Change in Case Closures from Previous Year	-6.0% (-7)
Case Characteristics	
Recipient Children	
0 (expectant mother)	0.0%
1	56.4%
2	21.8%
3 or more	21.8%
Recipient Adults	
0 (children only)	38.2%
1	56.4%
2	5.5%
Months of TCA Receipt	
Average [Median] TCA Spell	13.2 [8]
Average [Median] in Previous 60	18.9 [13]
Caseload Designations	
Work-Eligible Cases	55.5%
Single-Parent Cases	27.3%
Earnings	16.4%
Two-Parent Household	4.5%
Other Work-Eligible Cases	7.3%
Work-Exempt Cases	44.5%
Child-Only	38.2%
Child Under One	4.5%
Other Work-Exempt Cases	1.8%
Top Three Case Closure Reasons	
Income Above the Eligibility Limit	30.0%
Eligibility/Verification Information Not Provided	18.2%
No Recertification for Benefits	14.5%
Not Eligible	14.5%
Work Sanctions	
2015-2016	11.8%
2014-2015	17.1%
2013-2014	18.8%
Child Support Sanctions	
2015-2016	0.0%
2014-2015	3.4%
2013-2014	5.4%

Caroline County: 2015-2016	98 Case Closures
Percent Change in Case Closures from Previous Year	-26.9% (-36)
Case Characteristics	
Recipient Children	
0 (expectant mother)	0.0%
1	49.0%
2	36.7%
3 or more	14.3%
Recipient Adults	
0 (children only)	56.1%
1	40.8%
2	3.1%
Months of TCA Receipt	
Average [Median] TCA Spell	15.6 [8]
Average [Median] in Previous 60	22.6 [19]
Caseload Designations	
Work-Eligible Cases	36.7%
Single-Parent Cases	26.5%
Earnings	6.1%
Two-Parent Household	2.0%
Other Work-Eligible Cases	2.0%
Work-Exempt Cases	63.3%
Child-Only	56.1%
Child Under One	5.1%
Other Work-Exempt Cases	2.0%
Top Three Case Closure Reasons	
Income Above the Eligibility Limit	33.7%
Not Eligible	19.4%
No Recertification for Benefits	12.2%
Work Sanctions	
2015-2016	11.2%
2014-2015	7.5%
2013-2014	6.8%
Child Support Sanctions	
2015-2016	4.1%
2014-2015	0.0%
2013-2014	0.7%

Carroll County 2015-2016	183 Case Closures
Percent Change in Case Closures from Previous Year	-21.8% (-51)
Case Characteristics	
Recipient Children	
0 (expectant mother)	3.3%
1	47.3%
2	28.0%
3 or more	21.4%
Recipient Adults	
0 (children only)	26.9%
1	67.6%
2	5.5%
Months of TCA Receipt	
Average [Median] TCA Spell	11.3 [6]
Average [Median] in Previous 60	17.0 [11]
Caseload Designations	
Work-Eligible Cases	59.0%
Single-Parent Cases	38.3%
Earnings	8.2%
Two-Parent Household	2.7%
Other Work-Eligible Cases	9.8%
Work-Exempt Cases	41.0%
Child-Only	26.2%
Child Under One	10.9%
Other Work-Exempt Cases	3.8%
Top Three Case Closure Reasons	
Eligibility/Verification Information Not Provided	31.7%
Work Sanction	20.8%
Income Above the Eligibility Limit	14.2%
Work Sanctions	
2015-2016	20.8%
2014-2015	26.1%
2013-2014	27.1%
Child Support Sanctions	
2015-2016	0.0%
2014-2015	0.0%
2013-2014	0.6%

Cecil County: 2015-2016	467 Case Closures
Percent Change in Case Closures from Previous Year	-8.6% (-44)
Case Characteristics	
Recipient Children	
0 (expectant mother)	3.4%
1	43.9%
2	28.3%
3 or more	24.4%
Recipient Adults	
0 (children only)	22.3%
1	71.9%
2	5.8%
Months of TCA Receipt	
Average [Median] TCA Spell	11.4 [6]
Average [Median] in Previous 60	20.3 [13]
Caseload Designations	
Work-Eligible Cases	66.6%
Single-Parent Cases	49.3%
Earnings	8.8%
Two-Parent Household	2.8%
Other Work-Eligible Cases	5.8%
Work-Exempt Cases	33.4%
Child-Only	21.8%
Child Under One	8.4%
Other Work-Exempt Cases	3.2%
Top Three Case Closure Reasons	
Work Sanction	28.3%
No Recertification for Benefits	18.6%
Income Above the Eligibility Limit	17.6%
Work Sanctions	
2015-2016	28.3%
2014-2015	32.7%
2013-2014	33.3%
Child Support Sanctions	
2015-2016	2.6%
2014-2015	3.5%
2013-2014	3.5%

Charles County: 2015-2016	320 Case Closures
Percent Change in Case Closures from Previous Year	-22.0% (-90)
Case Characteristics	
Recipient Children	
0 (expectant mother)	1.9%
1	46.6%
2	27.8%
3 or more	23.8%
Recipient Adults	
0 (children only)	19.7%
1	79.4%
2	0.9%
Months of TCA Receipt	
Average [Median] TCA Spell	10.5 [5]
Average [Median] in Previous 60	18.3 [13]
Caseload Designations	
Work-Eligible Cases	64.7%
Single-Parent Cases	43.8%
Earnings	13.4%
Two-Parent Household	0.0%
Other Work-Eligible Cases	7.5%
Work-Exempt Cases	35.3%
Child-Only	20.0%
Child Under One	13.8%
Other Work-Exempt Cases	1.6%
Top Three Case Closure Reasons	
Eligibility/Verification Information Not Provided	27.8%
Income Above the Eligibility Limit	19.7%
Work Sanction	18.8%
Work Sanctions	
2015-2016	18.8%
2014-2015	27.8%
2013-2014	32.0%
Child Support Sanctions	
2015-2016	1.6%
2014-2015	2.9%
2013-2014	5.7%

Dorchester County: 2015-2016	230 Case Closures
Percent Change in Case Closures from Previous Year	4.5% (+10)
Case Characteristics	
Recipient Children	
0 (expectant mother)	1.3%
1	44.3%
2	30.9%
3 or more	23.5%
Recipient Adults	
0 (children only)	17.8%
1	77.0%
2	5.2%
Months of TCA Receipt	
Average [Median] TCA Spell	12.7 [9]
Average [Median] in Previous 60	21.3 [15]
Caseload Designations	
Work-Eligible Cases	69.7%
Single-Parent Cases	50.0%
Earnings	14.5%
Two-Parent Household	5.3%
Other Work-Eligible Cases	0.0%
Work-Exempt Cases	30.3%
Child-Only	18.0%
Child Under One	8.8%
Other Work-Exempt Cases	3.5%
Top Three Case Closure Reasons	
Work Sanction	27.4%
Income Above the Eligibility Limit	17.0%
No Recertification for Benefits	14.8%
Work Sanctions	
2015-2016	27.4%
2014-2015	33.2%
2013-2014	40.0%
Child Support Sanctions	
2015-2016	7.4%
2014-2015	4.1%
2013-2014	3.6%

Frederick County 2015-2016	334 Case Closures
Percent Change in Case Closures from Previous Year	-10.7% (-40)
Case Characteristics	
Recipient Children	
0 (expectant mother)	1.8%
1	47.3%
2	28.4%
3 or more	22.5%
Recipient Adults	
0 (children only)	20.7%
1	73.4%
2	6.0%
Months of TCA Receipt	
Average [Median] TCA Spell	9.7 [5]
Average [Median] in Previous 60	17.0 [12]
Caseload Designations	
Work-Eligible Cases	68.3%
Single-Parent Cases	41.0%
Earnings	14.7%
Two-Parent Household	4.2%
Other Work-Eligible Cases	8.4%
Work-Exempt Cases	31.7%
Child-Only	21.0%
Child Under One	8.1%
Other Work-Exempt Cases	2.7%
Top Three Case Closure Reasons	
Income Above the Eligibility Limit	24.9%
Work Sanction	24.9%
Eligibility/Verification Information Not Provided	15.9%
Work Sanctions	
2015-2016	24.9%
2014-2015	23.8%
2013-2014	28.3%
Child Support Sanctions	
2015-2016	4.5%
2014-2015	2.9%
2013-2014	6.4%

Garrett County: 2015-2016	75 Case Closures
Percent Change in Case Closures from Previous Year	25% (+15)
Case Characteristics	
Recipient Children	
0 (expectant mother)	0.0%
1	57.3%
2	21.3%
3 or more	21.3%
Recipient Adults	
0 (children only)	17.3%
1	68.0%
2	14.7%
Months of TCA Receipt	
Average [Median] TCA Spell	10.3 [5]
Average [Median] in Previous 60	17.4 [9]
Caseload Designations	
Work-Eligible Cases	66.7%
Single-Parent Cases	38.7%
Earnings	10.7%
Two-Parent Household	10.7%
Other Work-Eligible Cases	6.7%
Work-Exempt Cases	33.3%
Child-Only	17.3%
Child Under One	4.0%
Other Work-Exempt Cases	12.0%
Top Three Case Closure Reasons	
Income Above the Eligibility Limit	26.7%
Eligibility/Verification Information Not Provided	20.0%
Work Sanction	17.3%
Work Sanctions	
2015-2016	17.3%
2014-2015	26.7%
2013-2014	16.2%
Child Support Sanctions	
2015-2016	0.0%
2014-2015	1.7%
2013-2014	0.0%

Harford County: 2015-2016	467 Case Closures
Percent Change in Case Closures from Previous Year	-10.5% (-55)
Case Characteristics	
Recipient Children	
0 (expectant mother)	0.2%
1	52.7%
2	25.3%
3 or more	21.8%
Recipient Adults	
0 (children only)	28.7%
1	67.0%
2	4.3%
Months of TCA Receipt	
Average [Median] TCA Spell	12.5 [6]
Average [Median] in Previous 60	20.6 [14]
Caseload Designations	
Work-Eligible Cases	60.2%
Single-Parent Cases	43.3%
Earnings	9.0%
Two-Parent Household	3.6%
Other Work-Eligible Cases	4.3%
Work-Exempt Cases	39.8%
Child-Only	28.5%
Child Under One	6.0%
Other Work-Exempt Cases	5.4%
Top Three Case Closure Reasons	
Work Sanction	22.1%
Eligibility/Verification Information Not Provided	19.9%
Income Above the Eligibility Limit	18.2%
Work Sanctions	
2015-2016	22.1%
2014-2015	23.0%
2013-2014	26.8%
Child Support Sanctions	
2015-2016	3.6%
2014-2015	3.6%
2013-2014	2.3%

Howard County: 2015-2016	443 Case Closures
Percent Change in Case Closures from Previous Year	0.2% (+1)
Case Characteristics	
Recipient Children	
0 (expectant mother)	1.1%
1	48.0%
2	28.1%
3 or more	22.9%
Recipient Adults	
0 (children only)	21.3%
1	74.4%
2	4.3%
Months of TCA Receipt	
Average [Median] TCA Spell	12.9 [9]
Average [Median] in Previous 60	26.3 [22]
Caseload Designations	
Work-Eligible Cases	68.3%
Single-Parent Cases	52.9%
Earnings	7.0%
Two-Parent Household	3.6%
Other Work-Eligible Cases	4.8%
Work-Exempt Cases	31.7%
Child-Only	21.0%
Child Under One	5.4%
Other Work-Exempt Cases	5.2%
Top Three Case Closure Reasons	
Work Sanction	25.5%
No Recertification for Benefits	25.5%
Eligibility/Verification Information Not Provided	24.4%
Work Sanctions	
2015-2016	25.5%
2014-2015	28.7%
2013-2014	32.9%
Child Support Sanctions	
2015-2016	3.4%
2014-2015	1.6%
2013-2014	2.5%

Kent County 2015-2016	64 Case Closures
Percent Change in Case Closures from Previous Year	-3.0% (-2)
Case Characteristics	
Recipient Children	
0 (expectant mother)	3.1%
1	51.6%
2	28.1%
3 or more	17.2%
Recipient Adults	
0 (children only)	15.6%
1	76.6%
2	7.8%
Months of TCA Receipt	
Average [Median] TCA Spell	9.5 [5]
Average [Median] in Previous 60	20.1 [15]
Caseload Designations	
Work-Eligible Cases	78.1%
Single-Parent Cases	42.2%
Earnings	25.0%
Two-Parent Household	4.7%
Other Work-Eligible Cases	6.3%
Work-Exempt Cases	21.9%
Child-Only	15.6%
Child Under One	4.7%
Other Work-Exempt Cases	1.6%
Top Three Case Closure Reasons	
Income Above the Eligibility Limit	29.7%
Work Sanction	26.6%
Eligibility/Verification Information Not Provided	25.0%
Work Sanctions	
2015-2016	26.6%
2014-2015	21.2%
2013-2014	22.2%
Child Support Sanctions	
2015-2016	1.6%
2014-2015	0.0%
2013-2014	1.2%

Montgomery County: 2015-2016	1,072 Case Closures
Percent Change in Case Closures from Previous Year	-15.8% (-201)
Case Characteristics	
Recipient Children	
0 (expectant mother)	2.4%
1	43.3%
2	27.4%
3 or more	26.9%
Recipient Adults	
0 (children only)	20.0%
1	68.6%
2	11.5%
Months of TCA Receipt	
Average [Median] TCA Spell	9.2 [5]
Average [Median] in Previous 60	17.4 [11]
Caseload Designations	
Work-Eligible Cases	66.4%
Single-Parent Cases	40.3%
Earnings	6.6%
Two-Parent Household	10.0%
Other Work-Eligible Cases	9.5%
Work-Exempt Cases	33.6%
Child-Only	20.3%
Child Under One	9.9%
Other Work-Exempt Cases	3.4%
Top Three Case Closure Reasons	
Work Sanction	34.4%
Income Above the Eligibility Limit	24.8%
Eligibility/Verification Information Not Provided	10.4%
Work Sanctions	
2015-2016	34.4%
2014-2015	39.3%
2013-2014	42.7%
Child Support Sanctions	
2015-2016	8.1%
2014-2015	7.7%
2013-2014	6.3%

Prince George's County: 2015-2016	2,119 Case Closures
Percent Change in Case Closures from Previous Year	-9.6% (-225)
Case Characteristics	
Recipient Children	
0 (expectant mother)	1.7%
1	45.5%
2	28.7%
3 or more	24.2%
Recipient Adults	
0 (children only)	28.6%
1	66.9%
2	4.5%
Months of TCA Receipt	
Average [Median] TCA Spell	14.5 [8]
Average [Median] in Previous 60	23.5 [17]
Caseload Designations	
Work-Eligible Cases	59.0%
Single-Parent Cases	43.9%
Earnings	8.4%
Two-Parent Household	3.9%
Other Work-Eligible Cases	2.8%
Work-Exempt Cases	41.0%
Child-Only	28.6%
Child Under One	8.8%
Other Work-Exempt Cases	3.5%
Top Three Case Closure Reasons	
No Recertification for Benefits	27.8%
Work Sanction	27.2%
Income Above the Eligibility Limit	16.1%
Work Sanctions	
2015-2016	27.2%
2014-2015	30.2%
2013-2014	37.8%
Child Support Sanctions	
2015-2016	7.2%
2014-2015	7.0%
2013-2014	6.6%

Queen Anne's County: 2015-2016	65 Case Closures
Percent Change in Case Closures from Previous Year	-27.8% (-25)
Case Characteristics	
Recipient Children	
0 (expectant mother)	4.6%
1	49.2%
2	30.8%
3 or more	15.4%
Recipient Adults	
0 (children only)	33.8%
1	63.1%
2	3.1%
Months of TCA Receipt	
Average [Median] TCA Spell	10.1 [6]
Average [Median] in Previous 60	15.3 [8]
Caseload Designations	
Work-Eligible Cases	50.8%
Single-Parent Cases	40.0%
Earnings	9.2%
Two-Parent Household	1.5%
Other Work-Eligible Cases	0.0%
Work-Exempt Cases	49.2%
Child-Only	32.3%
Child Under One	12.3%
Other Work-Exempt Cases	4.6%
Top Three Case Closure Reasons	
Income Above the Eligibility Limit	35.4%
Work Sanction	15.4%
No Recertification for Benefits	15.4%
Not Eligible	15.4%
Work Sanctions	
2015-2016	15.4%
2014-2015	28.9%
2013-2014	28.0%
Child Support Sanctions	
2015-2016	0.0%
2014-2015	5.6%
2013-2014	8.5%

St. Mary's County 2015-2016	437 Case Closures
Percent Change in Case Closures from Previous Year	-11.5% (-57)
Case Characteristics	
Recipient Children	
0 (expectant mother)	2.1%
1	43.6%
2	28.9%
3 or more	25.5%
Recipient Adults	
0 (children only)	12.6%
1	73.9%
2	13.5%
Months of TCA Receipt	
Average [Median] TCA Spell	9.3 [5]
Average [Median] in Previous 60	18.9 [14]
Caseload Designations	
Work-Eligible Cases	79.6%
Single-Parent Cases	42.8%
Earnings	21.3%
Two-Parent Household	10.3%
Other Work-Eligible Cases	5.3%
Work-Exempt Cases	20.4%
Child-Only	12.6%
Child Under One	6.6%
Other Work-Exempt Cases	1.1%
Top Three Case Closure Reasons	
Income Above the Eligibility Limit	31.4%
Eligibility/Verification Information Not Provided	19.9%
Work Sanction	18.1%
Work Sanctions	
2015-2016	18.1%
2014-2015	30.8%
2013-2014	38.3%
Child Support Sanctions	
2015-2016	3.4%
2014-2015	2.8%
2013-2014	1.5%

Somerset County: 2015-2016	153 Case Closures
Percent Change in Case Closures from Previous Year	-5.0% (-8)
Case Characteristics	
Recipient Children	
0 (expectant mother)	3.3%
1	46.4%
2	20.9%
3 or more	29.4%
Recipient Adults	
0 (children only)	19.0%
1	72.5%
2	8.5%
Months of TCA Receipt	
Average [Median] TCA Spell	13.0 [6]
Average [Median] in Previous 60	24.5 [18]
Caseload Designations	
Work-Eligible Cases	73.2%
Single-Parent Cases	54.2%
Earnings	10.5%
Two-Parent Household	6.5%
Other Work-Eligible Cases	2.0%
Work-Exempt Cases	26.8%
Child-Only	19.0%
Child Under One	3.9%
Other Work-Exempt Cases	3.9%
Top Three Case Closure Reasons	
Work Sanction	30.1%
Income Above the Eligibility Limit	26.1%
Requested Closure	13.1%
Work Sanctions	
2015-2016	30.1%
2014-2015	32.9%
2013-2014	32.4%
Child Support Sanctions	
2015-2016	4.6%
2014-2015	1.2%
2013-2014	0.7%

Talbot County: 2015-2016	43 Case Closures
Percent Change in Case Closures from Previous Year	-2.3% (-1)
Case Characteristics	
Recipient Children	
0 (expectant mother)	4.7%
1	53.5%
2	25.6%
3 or more	16.3%
Recipient Adults	
0 (children only)	30.2%
1	69.8%
2	0.0%
Months of TCA Receipt	
Average [Median] TCA Spell	9.9 [5]
Average [Median] in Previous 60	16.7 [11]
Caseload Designations	
Work-Eligible Cases	67.4%
Single-Parent Cases	27.9%
Earnings	32.6%
Two-Parent Household	0.0%
Other Work-Eligible Cases	7.0%
Work-Exempt Cases	32.6%
Child-Only	30.2%
Child Under One	2.3%
Other Work-Exempt Cases	0.0%
Top Three Case Closure Reasons	
Income Above the Eligibility Limit	41.9%
Eligibility/Verification Information Not Provided	18.6%
Work Sanction	9.3%
Not Eligible	9.3%
No Recertification for Benefits	9.3%
Work Sanctions	
2015-2016	9.3%
2014-2015	4.5%
2013-2014	3.6%
Child Support Sanctions	
2015-2016	4.7%
2014-2015	6.8%
2013-2014	0.0%

Washington County: 2015-2016	670 Case Closures
Percent Change in Case Closures from Previous Year	2.1% (+14)
Case Characteristics	
Recipient Children	
0 (expectant mother)	2.2%
1	43.3%
2	27.2%
3 or more	27.3%
Recipient Adults	
0 (children only)	20.1%
1	75.1%
2	4.8%
Months of TCA Receipt	
Average [Median] TCA Spell	10.1 [5]
Average [Median] in Previous 60	19.4 [14]
Caseload Designations	
Work-Eligible Cases	64.5%
Single-Parent Cases	43.7%
Earnings	11.8%
Two-Parent Household	3.1%
Other Work-Eligible Cases	5.8%
Work-Exempt Cases	35.5%
Child-Only	20.3%
Child Under One	11.3%
Other Work-Exempt Cases	3.9%
Top Three Case Closure Reasons	
No Recertification for Benefits	31.6%
Eligibility/Verification Information Not Provided	16.9%
Income Above Limit for Benefits	16.0%
Work Sanctions	
2015-2016	14.6%
2014-2015	17.8%
2013-2014	19.0%
Child Support Sanctions	
2015-2016	1.3%
2014-2015	1.7%
2013-2014	1.0%

Wicomico County 2015-2016	575 Case Closures
Percent Change in Case Closures from Previous Year	-17.0% (-118)
Case Characteristics	
Recipient Children	
0 (expectant mother)	3.3%
1	39.1%
2	31.7%
3 or more	25.9%
Recipient Adults	
0 (children only)	17.0%
1	77.2%
2	5.7%
Months of TCA Receipt	
Average [Median] TCA Spell	9.2 [5]
Average [Median] in Previous 60	23.1 [18]
Caseload Designations	
Work-Eligible Cases	70.8%
Single-Parent Cases	50.6%
Earnings	12.9%
Two-Parent Household	5.6%
Other Work-Eligible Cases	1.7%
Work-Exempt Cases	29.2%
Child-Only	16.7%
Child Under One	8.5%
Other Work-Exempt Cases	4.0%
Top Three Case Closure Reasons	
Work Sanction	29.6%
Income Above the Eligibility Limit	20.2%
Eligibility/Verification Information Not Provided	18.4%
Work Sanctions	
2015-2016	29.6%
2014-2015	31.3%
2013-2014	33.8%
Child Support Sanctions	
2015-2016	4.5%
2014-2015	4.5%
2013-2014	2.8%

Worcester County: 2015-2016	55 Case Closures
Percent Change in Case Closures from Previous Year	-26.7% (-20)
Case Characteristics	
Recipient Children	
0 (expectant mother)	1.8%
1	60.0%
2	21.8%
3 or more	16.4%
Recipient Adults	
0 (children only)	43.6%
1	54.5%
2	1.8%
Months of TCA Receipt	
Average [Median] TCA Spell	13.0 [7]
Average [Median] in Previous 60	18.1 [10]
Caseload Designations	
Work-Eligible Cases	45.5%
Single-Parent Cases	36.4%
Earnings	7.3%
Two-Parent Household	1.8%
Other Work-Eligible Cases	0.0%
Work-Exempt Cases	54.5%
Child-Only	43.6%
Child Under One	7.3%
Other Work-Exempt Cases	3.6%
Top Three Case Closure Reasons	
Not Eligible	23.6%
Eligibility/Verification Information Not Provided	18.2%
Income Above Limit for Benefits	18.2%
Work Sanctions	
2015-2016	7.3%
2014-2015	16.0%
2013-2014	15.3%
Child Support Sanctions	
2015-2016	7.3%
2014-2015	8.0%
2013-2014	5.6%

Maryland: 2015-2016	20,668 Case Closures
Percent Change in Case Closures from Previous Year	-10.7% (-2,465)
Case Characteristics	
Recipient Children	
0 (expectant mother)	2.9%
1	46.6%
2	27.6%
3 or more	22.9%
Recipient Adults	
0 (children only)	18.8%
1	76.5%
2	4.7%
Months of TCA Receipt	
Average [Median] TCA Spell	10.9 [6]
Average [Median] in Previous 60	23.4 [18]
Caseload Designations	
Work-Eligible Cases	69.5%
Single-Parent Cases	50.5%
Earnings	10.5%
Two-Parent Household	3.6%
Other Work-Eligible Cases	4.9%
Work-Exempt Cases	30.5%
Child-Only	18.8%
Child Under One	7.6%
Other Work-Exempt Cases	4.1%
Top Three Case Closure Reasons	
Work Sanction	29.9%
Eligibility/Verification Information Not Provided	19.8%
Income Above the Eligibility Limit	17.5%
Work Sanctions	
2015-2016	29.9%
2014-2015	33.7%
2013-2014	34.2%
Child Support Sanctions	
2015-2016	5.0%
2014-2015	3.4%
2013-2014	4.7%



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