

# CASELOAD EXITS AT THE LOCAL LEVEL: THE SEVENTH YEAR OF FIP

CATHERINE E. BORN, PhD  
PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

ANDREA HETLING, PH.D.  
PROJECT DIRECTOR

CORRENE SAUNDERS, B.A.  
PROJECT ANALYST

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UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND  
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK  
525 WEST REDWOOD STREET  
BALTIMORE, MD 21201

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For additional information about the report or the study, please contact Dr. Catherine Born at the School of Social Work (410.706.5134, [cborn@ssw.umaryland.edu](mailto:cborn@ssw.umaryland.edu)). For more information about welfare reform in Maryland, please contact Mr. Richard Larson at the Department of Human Resources (410.767.7150, [rlarson@dhr.state.md.us](mailto:rlarson@dhr.state.md.us) or [welfarereformer@prodigy.net](mailto:welfarereformer@prodigy.net)).

## Table of Contents

### List of Tables and Figures

### Executive Summary

Introduction .....	1
Methods .....	3
Findings .....	5
Case Closings by Month: Statewide and Jurisdictional Analysis .....	5
Case Closings Relative to Caseload Size: Jurisdictional Analysis .....	12
Characteristics of Exiting Cases: Statewide and Jurisdictional Analyses .....	17
Length of Exiting Spell .....	17
Number of Adults in the Assistance Unit .....	18
Number of Children in the Assistance Unit and Size of Assistance Unit .....	19
Characteristics of Exiting Payees: Statewide and Jurisdictional Analyses .....	26
Race and Gender of Payee .....	26
Age of Payee .....	27
Age at First Birth .....	27
Age of Youngest Child .....	28
Administrative Reasons for Case Closure: Statewide and Jurisdictional Analyses .....	34
Full Family Sanctions: Statewide and Jurisdictional Analyses .....	38
Conclusions .....	41
References .....	43
Appendix A. Map of Maryland .....	45
Appendix B. Top Reasons for Case Closure .....	47
Appendix C. Full Family Sanctions: 10/02 - 9/03 .....	51

## **List of Tables and Figures**

Table 1. Number of Closing Cases by Month and Jurisdiction . . . . .	8
Table 2. Percent of Total Closings/Caseload by Jurisdiction:10/02 - 9/03 . . . . .	15
Table 3. Case Characteristics by Jurisdiction:10/02 - 9/03 . . . . .	22
Table 4. Household Characteristics by Jurisdiction: 10/02 - 9/03 . . . . .	30
Figure 1. Closing Cases by Month: Maryland . . . . .	6
Figure 2. Map of Percent Differences between Total Closings/Caseload by Jurisdiction. . . . .	16
Figure 3. Top 5 Closing Reasons . . . . .	37
Figure 4. Sanctions . . . . .	40

## **Executive Summary**

This is the eighth report in a series sponsored by an on-going partnership between the Family Investment Administration of the Maryland Department of Human Resources (DHR) and the University of Maryland School of Social Work (SSW). In addition to a number of other studies regarding welfare reform and Maryland's Temporary Cash Assistance Program (TCA, Maryland's version of TANF), this series examines both statewide and jurisdictional patterns in the universe of caseload exits for each 12-month period since welfare reform began in October 1996. We aim in this report to address two broad questions:

- 1. What are the statewide and jurisdictional trends in cash assistance case closings during the seventh year of welfare reform?**
- 2. Statewide and for each subdivision, what is the profile of cases which closed and what are the administrative reasons for case closure?**

Today's report focuses on the seventh year of welfare reform (October 2002 to September 2003) and is based on 25,348 unique TCA case closings that occurred during this time.<sup>1</sup> Following are highlights of major study findings.

- **From October 2002 to September 2003, 25,348 unique TCA cases closed at least once in Maryland. This marks the lowest number of case closures since welfare reform began, and a return to the general trend of year-to-year decline that was interrupted by a slight increase in closures in the sixth year.**

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<sup>1</sup>In this report, a closing case or case closure is defined as an assistance unit which, at least once during the 12-month study period, ceased receiving Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA, formerly Aid to Families with Dependent Children). That is, we count "cases" or families, rather than "closures". For this reason, the number of cases we report may differ from the number reported by the Maryland Department of Human Resources for the same period.

- **The greatest number of closings statewide occurred in the third (n = 6,423) and fourth (n = 6,603) quarters of the study period. On average, about 2,000 cases closed monthly with a high of 2,276 cases closed in June 2003, and a low of 1,886 in January 2003.**

Following the unprecedented welfare reform measures of 1996, sharp caseload declines ensued nationwide; in Maryland alone 41,212 cases closed between October 1996 and September 1997, the first year of reform in our state (Welfare and Child Support Research and Training Group, 1998). That number has gradually decreased over the past seven years, despite a slight increase of 401 closings between Years Five and Six. In the seventh year, Maryland experienced its lowest number of closings (n=25,348) since the first year of reform.

As TANF reauthorization appears to be drawing near, it is an open question how its increased work requirements may affect welfare leavers and stayers. Baseline or pre-reauthorization data on the numbers of closing cases and the reasons for case closure at the state and jurisdiction level can provide Maryland with one way to track the effects of the new rules.

- **The majority of case closings occurred in five jurisdictions: Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Montgomery, and Prince George's Counties; and Baltimore City. Although consistent with trends in previous years, the percentage of total closings accounted for by these localities has decreased to 82.1%. Likewise, the percentage of the total caseload carried by these jurisdictions has also decreased to 83.8%.**
- **All jurisdictions closed cases at an anticipated rate as predicted by the percentage of the total caseload served, within a two percentage point difference.**

In order to effectively compare local closing patterns despite a wide range in caseload sizes, we evaluate the difference between the percentages of statewide active caseload and statewide case closings for each jurisdiction. Historically, and as

expected, the majority of active cases and of case closings occur within the five most populous jurisdictions. Since the third year of reform (October 1998 to September 1999) until the current study period (October 2002 to September 2003), a little over 80% of both the caseload and closings were contained in these five localities. In the third year they contained 87.1% of the caseload and 85.8% of the closings. Each year, those numbers have decreased and, in the seventh year of reform, the five largest jurisdictions accounted for 83.8% of the total caseload and 82.1% of the total closures.

Overall, jurisdictions accounted for the same percentage of statewide total closures as they did of the statewide total caseload. In the past, concern was raised regarding Baltimore City and Prince George's County which traditionally accounted for a lower proportion of case closings than their share of the caseload. Both jurisdictions continue to exhibit a disparity between the percentages, but this year the differences were fairly slight. Baltimore City had a -1.0 percentage point difference, and Prince George's County had a -1.6 percentage point difference, which is one percentage point smaller than in the sixth year. The results from all other jurisdictions fell within a half-percentage point of having the exact proportion of closures as their share of the average annual TCA caseload.

- **Statewide, the typical case that closed between October 2002 and September 2003 consisted of two people (38.5%), or one adult (76.7%) and one child (47.2%). The majority of cases had been open for a year or less before closing (77.6%), and very few had been open for longer than five consecutive years before closing (1.9%).**

- **Statewide, the typical payee on a case that closed in the seventh year of reform was an African-American (79.4%) woman (95.1%) in her early thirties (median 32 years) who had given birth before turning twenty-one (57.4%). Approximately 40% of payees had at least one child under the age of three.**

These findings closely resemble those reported in past years, with few exceptions. Most notably, the percentage of cases that had been open for more than five consecutive years before closing continues to decline, gradually shrinking from 10% and 11% in the first two years of reform to 1.9% in the seventh year. Regarding payee demographics, there have been no apparent trends or notable changes over the past several years.

- **Jurisdictional data mirrored statewide data regarding typical cases and payee characteristics, with some variation in proportions of assistance unit size and composition, and the percentage of closing cases with young children.**

Among closing cases statewide, a plurality (38.5%) of assistance units consisted of two people (median=2.0), except in Garrett County where there were more cases with three persons than with two (36.1% vs. 27.8%) and the median assistance unit size was three persons. Most closing cases included at least one child in the assistance unit (96.5%), and one adult (76.7%). Statewide, only 2.9% of case closures included two adults in the assistance unit. Garrett County, with fully 16.5% of all exiting cases containing two adults, was a notable exception.

The percentage of child-only cases among closures also varies across jurisdictions, though not in a consistent way. The statewide percentage of child-only closing cases was 20.4%, yet in Washington County the percentage was 32.3% and in Garrett County, the percentage was 8.2%. Four out of ten (39.7%) cases that closed



during our study period included children under the age of three. In several counties, this percentage reached over fifty percent: Allegany (51.2%), Washington (56.9%), Wicomico (50.9%), and Worcester (50.5%).

- **Between October 2002 and September 2003, the following top five administrative reasons for case closure accounted for 84.8% of all closures: no recertification/no determination (24.5%); income above limit (including started work) (20.5%); work sanction (19.6%); eligibility/verification information not provided (14.4%); and not eligible (5.8%).**
- **Income above limit (including started work) was the most common case closure reason in 16 of 24 jurisdictions and, excluding Baltimore City, is the most common reason for closure statewide.**
- **Jurisdictional results are similar to statewide results with some exceptions in the order of prevalence between the top two reasons.**

The top reason for case closure statewide, “no recertification/no redetermination”, includes situations in which payees failed to provide necessary information in a timely matter for recertification, as well as those who may have obtained employment but did not notify the agency and did not come to recertify their case. According to recent data on leavers, about half of all welfare leavers were employed in the quarter of exit from welfare (50.5%, Owwigho, Born, Ruck, and Tracy (2003) and it is likely that at least some of the “no recertification/no redetermination” cases work after exiting. It must be noted also that when data from Baltimore City are excluded from the analysis, “income above limit” was the top reason for case closure, as it was the top reason in 16 of 24 jurisdictions. Regardless, statewide with or without Baltimore City data these two reasons accounted for almost half of all case closures in Year Seven.

- **Full family sanctions accounted for about one in five (22.2%) case closures statewide. Almost nine out of ten sanctions (88.2%) were work-related and the remainder were related to child support enforcement. There is wide variation across jurisdictions.**

The third most common reason for case closure statewide was a full family sanction for non-cooperation with work requirements. In Maryland, noncompliance with work requirements results in a full family sanction, or the cessation of cash benefits for the entire assistance unit. The percentage of work related sanctions has grown from 5.5% of total closures in the first year of reform (1996-1997) to 19.6% of total closures in Year Seven (2002-2003). In other words, almost one in five closures were due to work sanctions statewide. In particular, four jurisdictions mirrored the state's average (Allegany (19.9%), Carroll (19.6%), Kent (19.6%), and Montgomery (21.9%) Counties), and in two jurisdictions the rate was closer to one in four (Garrett County (25.5%); and Baltimore City (24.2%).

Child support sanctions have remained a smaller proportion of closings but have also increased since the beginning of reform, accounting for 0.6% of statewide closures in the first year of reform, and 2.6% of closures in Year Seven. However, in several jurisdictions child support sanctions comprised over 5.0% of closures this year: Baltimore (5.2%); Howard (5.2%); Kent (6.5%); Queen Anne's (6.8%); and Worcester (6.2%) Counties.

In sum, the data on the seventh year of reform shows both important turns in some initial trends and a continuation of others. In particular, data from Baltimore City indicates a positive turn. In the first five years, Baltimore City's share of the total active caseload increased from year to year largely due to its slower rate of caseload decline

relative to the 23 counties. However, in the past two years, the City's share of the active caseload has decreased, although it still accounts for more cases than the 23 counties combined. In the seventh year of reform, Baltimore City carried 55.1% of the total caseload, the lowest percentage since Year Two (October 1997 to September 1998). In addition, the gap between the City's closures and caseload in Year Seven was -1.0 percentage points, a very small gap compared to that of -17.1 percentage points found in Year One (October 1996 to September 1997).

On the other hand, data from Prince George's County show that its percentage of the active caseload may be on the rise. In Year One of reform, Prince George's County carried 15.9% of the active caseload. This percentage decreased to 11.3% by the fourth year of reform (October 1999 to September 2000) but has slowly begun an upward turn; the data from the sixth year of reform indicated a 12.0% share, and the seventh year's data show 13.1%. The gap between the percentage of case closings and caseload has improved since the sixth year (-1.6 percentage points versus -2.6), but the disparity still exists and warrants that we continue to monitor this trend in the future.

Work sanctions have been a continued concern throughout this series, and in the seventh year of reform the data reveal a persisting trend. The percentage of cases closed due to full family sanctions for non-compliance with work requirements has steadily risen from year to year statewide as well as in Baltimore City. In Year Seven, the statewide rate is up to 19.6% and in Baltimore City has risen to 24.2%.

Overall, the picture remains generally positive. All jurisdictions are closing within two percentage points of their respective share of the active TCA caseload, two of the

top reasons for closure statewide and in most jurisdictions indicate that many customers have started work, and there do not appear to be any major changes in the types of cases closed. In future reports, we will continue to monitor closures due to work sanction, especially regarding any effects anticipated changes in work participation requirements may have.

## Introduction

The University of Maryland's School of Social Work, through a long-standing partnership with the Maryland Department of Human Resources (DHR), is carrying out a multi-faceted, multi-year research program focused on the implementation, operation and outcomes of welfare reform in our state. The most well-known project is the *Life After Welfare* study which tracks short and long term post-exit experiences of more than ten thousand randomly-selected families who have left welfare since the beginning of reform (October 1996) and on which eight statewide reports have been issued. The *Life After Welfare* study provides empirical case- and individual-level data that policy-makers and administrators can use to judge how the reformed welfare program is working, to identify program modifications that may be needed, and to assess what happens to Maryland families once they no longer receive cash assistance.

The *Caseload Exits at the Local Level* series of reports provides additional information about Maryland welfare leavers, specifically, macro-level data that are not covered in the *Life After Welfare* study. By design, the *Life After Welfare* reports present detailed follow-up employment, recidivism and other data about a statewide random sample of exiting cases. In contrast, *Caseload Exits at the Local Level* reports examine the entire universe of cases which exited cash assistance in Maryland during a given year. Thus far, these reports include the following:

- *Caseload Exits at the Local Level: The Sixth Year of FIP.* (2003).  
Born, C.E., Ovwigho, P.C., and Tracy, K.
- *Caseload Exits at the Local Level: The Fifth Year of FIP.* (2002).  
Born, C.E., and Herbst, C.

- *Caseload Exits at the Local Level: The Fourth Year of FIP.* (2001).  
Born, C.E., Ruck, D., and Cordero, M.
- *Caseload Exits at the Local Level: The First Three Years of FIP.* (2000).  
Born, C.E., Ovwigho, P.C., and Cordero, M.L.
- *Caseload Exits at the Local Level: The Third Year of FIP.* (2000).  
Born, C.E., Caudill, P.J., Cordero, M.L., and Kunz, J.
- *Caseload Exits at the Local Level: The Second Year of FIP.* (1999).  
Born, C.E., Caudill, P.J., Spera, C., and Cordero, M.L.
- *Caseload Exits at the Local Level: The First Year of FIP.* (1998).  
Welfare and Child Support Research and Training Group.

This report, the eighth in the *Caseload Exits* series, is based on the 25,348 unduplicated cases which closed during the seventh year of reform (October 2002 - September 2003). It describes case characteristics, exit patterns and the use of full family sanctioning for each of the state's 24 jurisdictions and the state as a whole.

## **Methods**

Examining all cases that closed during the seventh full year of welfare reform allows us to answer a number of questions germane to program monitoring and planning. The main questions of interest are:

- What are the general trends in case closings in the seventh year of reform statewide and across jurisdictions?
- How does each jurisdiction's share of closings compare to its share of the overall average caseload for the same period of time?
- What is the general statewide profile of all seventh year exiting cases and the profile in each subdivision in terms of assistance unit size, number of adults, number of children and length of the most recent welfare spell?
- What are the demographic characteristics of exiting payees including: gender, race/ethnicity, age, age at first birth, and age of youngest child in the assistance unit?
- What are the most common administratively-recorded reasons for case closure?
- What proportion of cases, statewide and in each subdivision, left welfare during the seventh year because of a full family sanction for non-compliance with work requirements or non-cooperation with child support?

To answer these questions, aggregate data on case closings were obtained from monthly case closing extract files created from an administrative data system, the Client Automated Resources and Eligibility System (CARES). This system contains official records of customers' utilization of various public assistance and social service programs, including cash assistance, which are under the purview of the Department of Human Resources and local Departments of Social Services (LDSSes). There are 24 LDSSes in the state - one in each of Maryland's 23 counties and in the separate, incorporated City of Baltimore.

In addition to providing raw data on the number of case closings throughout the state, the extract files created from the administrative data system also contain the following data which are presented in this report:

- Assistance unit size - number of individuals included in a TCA grant;
- Case composition - number of children and adults included in a TCA grant;
- Application and case closing dates - from which length of current welfare spell is calculated;
- Closing code - administratively-recorded reason for welfare case closure; and
- Demographic characteristics of exiting payees - age, racial/ethnic group, age of youngest child in assistance unit, and age of female payees at the birth of their first child.

A case closing (or case closure), for purposes of this analysis, is defined as an assistance unit which, at least once during the 12-month study period, ceased receiving Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA) benefits (formerly AFDC) for at least one day. That is, we count “cases”, or families, rather than “closures” per se. Because some cases could, conceivably, have exited or closed more than once during the 12 month period, the total number of closures reported here may differ from the total number of closures reported in the Family Investment Administration’s statistical reports for the same period of time.



## Findings

The results presented in this chapter are based on the universe of unique cases (n=25,348) that exited Maryland's TANF program, Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA), at least once during the seventh full year of welfare reform (October 2002 to September 2003). Analyses include both statewide and jurisdictional descriptions of these particular cases and, as in past reports, are presented in the following sections:

- Case Closings by Month: Statewide and Jurisdictional Analyses
- Case Closings Relative to Caseload Size: Jurisdictional Analysis
- Characteristics of Exiting Cases: Statewide and Jurisdictional Analyses
- Characteristics of Exiting Payees: Statewide and Jurisdictional Analyses
- Administrative Reasons for Case Closure: Statewide and Jurisdictional Analyses
- Full Family Sanctions: Statewide and Jurisdictional Analyses

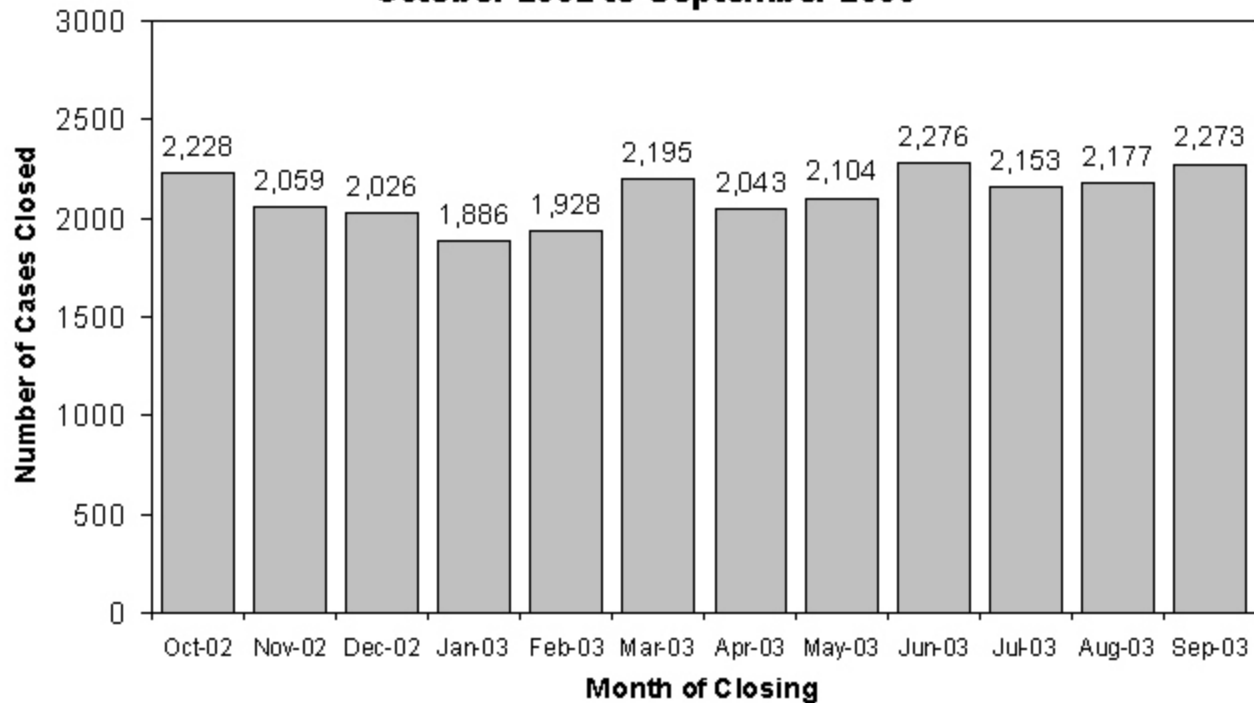
### **Case Closings by Month: Statewide and Jurisdictional Analysis<sup>2</sup>**

Statewide monthly case closing trends during Year Seven are illustrated in Figure 1, on the next page. Overall, a total of 25,348 unique families exited the welfare program at least once during the study period (October 2002 to September 2003). Historically over the past seven years of welfare reform Maryland has seen a general decreasing trend from year to year in the number of case closures. Beginning with a high of 41,212 cases in the first year of reform (October 1996 to September 1997), the trend continued into Year Five (October 2000 to September 2001) when 26,494 cases

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<sup>2</sup>For readers unfamiliar with Maryland, a state map is included as Appendix A.

**Figure 1. Maryland Case Closings by Month:  
October 2002 to September 2003**



closed. Data for the sixth year of reform revealed the reversal of the downward trend as the number of case closures rose by 401 cases to 26,895. Year Seven data presented in this report, however, shows a return to the general trend with the lowest number of case closures since the beginning of welfare reform (n=25,348).

As seen in Figure 1, the highest number of case closings in the seventh year occurred in the summer of 2003; the month of June had the highest number of monthly closings (n=2,276), and the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter (July through September) had the highest number of quarterly closings (n=6,603). In general, there was a decrease in case closings over the first part of the study period (October 2002 to January 2003) and then an increase over the remainder of the year. The fewest cases were closed in the month

of January (n=1,886). Likewise, the quarter with the fewest closings overall was the second one (January to March 2003), which incidentally had the lowest number of quarterly closings since the inception of this report series (n=6,009).

In Table 1 on the following page, we present details on monthly case closings across the state and by jurisdiction. The 24 jurisdictions of Maryland (23 counties and Baltimore City) vary in their diversity of population and economy and also have had considerable leeway in the implementation of their local welfare reform programs. Thus, it is important to note how the statewide patterns of case closure are reflected in the local communities. As foreshadowed in the statewide data, 12 counties (half of all jurisdictions) had their highest percent of case closings in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of the study period (July to September 2003): Allegany; Anne Arundel; Baltimore; Calvert; Caroline; Frederick; Harford; Montgomery; Prince George's; St. Mary's; Talbot; and Wicomico. In addition, Cecil County had its highest closings in both the second and fourth quarters. These thirteen counties are not geographically or socioeconomically homogeneous.

The highest quarterly case closure statistics from the remaining 11 jurisdictions were fairly evenly distributed across the year. Three jurisdictions (including Baltimore City) recorded their highest number of closings in the first quarter (October to December 2002), three (plus Cecil County) had their highest percentage of case closures in the second quarter (January to March 2003), and five had their highest number of closures in the third quarter (April to June 2003).

**Table 1. Number of Closing Cases by Month and Jurisdiction**

	<b>Maryland</b>	<b>Allegany</b>	<b>Anne Arundel</b>	<b>Baltimore</b>	<b>Calvert</b>	<b>Caroline</b>	<b>Carroll</b>
<b>October 2002</b>	2,228 (8.8%)	16 (8.8%)	89 (7.4%)	197 (9.5%)	12 (7.0%)	9 (7.3%)	24 (13.0%)
<b>November 2002</b>	2,059 (8.1%)	13 (7.2%)	95 (7.9%)	181 (8.7%)	17 (9.9%)	6 (4.9%)	16 (8.7%)
<b>December 2002</b>	2,026 (8.0%)	14 (7.7%)	114 (9.5%)	153 (7.4%)	10 (5.8%)	8 (6.5%)	14 (7.6%)
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Quarter</b>	<b>6,313 (24.9%)</b>	<b>43 (23.8%)</b>	<b>298 (24.9%)</b>	<b>531 (25.6%)</b>	<b>39 (22.7%)</b>	<b>23 (18.7%)</b>	<b>54 (29.3%)</b>
<b>January 2003</b>	1,886 (7.4%)	17 (9.4%)	84 (7.0%)	158 (7.6%)	15 (8.8%)	10 (8.1%)	14 (7.6%)
<b>February 2003</b>	1,928 (7.6%)	17 (9.4%)	109 (9.1%)	162 (7.8%)	17 (9.9%)	9 (7.3%)	13 (7.1%)
<b>March 2003</b>	2,195 (8.7%)	11 (6.1%)	113 (9.4%)	183 (8.8%)	10 (5.8%)	8 (6.5%)	13 (7.1%)
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter</b>	<b>6,009 (23.7%)</b>	<b>45 (24.9%)</b>	<b>306 (25.6%)</b>	<b>503 (24.2%)</b>	<b>42 (24.5%)</b>	<b>27 (21.9%)</b>	<b>40 (21.8%)</b>
<b>April 2003</b>	2,043 (8.1%)	11 (6.1%)	91 (7.6%)	145 (7.0%)	14 (8.2%)	9 (7.3%)	14 (7.6%)
<b>May 2003</b>	2,104 (8.3%)	20 (11.0%)	90 (7.5%)	181 (8.7%)	15 (8.8%)	10 (8.1%)	20 (10.9%)
<b>June 2003</b>	2,276 (9.0%)	14 (7.7%)	103 (8.6%)	167 (8.0%)	13 (7.6%)	14 (11.4%)	14 (7.6%)
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter</b>	<b>6,423 (25.3%)</b>	<b>45 (24.9%)</b>	<b>284 (23.7%)</b>	<b>493 (23.7%)</b>	<b>42 (24.6%)</b>	<b>33 (26.8%)</b>	<b>48 (26.1%)</b>
<b>July 2003</b>	2,153 (8.5%)	20 (11.0%)	99 (8.3%)	185 (8.9%)	22 (12.9%)	9 (7.3%)	16 (8.7%)
<b>August 2003</b>	2,177 (8.6%)	11 (6.1%)	99 (8.3%)	191 (9.2%)	18 (10.5%)	13 (10.6%)	11 (6.0%)
<b>September 2003</b>	2,273 (9.0%)	17 (9.4%)	110 (9.2%)	176 (8.5%)	8 (4.7%)	18 (14.6%)	15 (8.2%)
<b>4<sup>th</sup> Quarter</b>	<b>6,603 (26.0%)</b>	<b>48 (26.5%)</b>	<b>308 (25.8%)</b>	<b>552 (26.6%)</b>	<b>48 (28.1%)</b>	<b>40 (32.5%)</b>	<b>42 (22.9%)</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>25,348</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>1,196</b>	<b>2,079</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>184</b>

Note: Quarterly percentages may not represent the exact sum of the percentages for the individual months, due to rounding.

**Table 1. Number of Closing Cases by Month and Jurisdiction**

	<b>Cecil</b>	<b>Charles</b>	<b>Dorchester</b>	<b>Frederick</b>	<b>Garrett</b>	<b>Harford</b>
<b>October 2002</b>	27 (8.6%)	29 (7.7%)	20 (6.6%)	38 (9.8%)	10 (10.2%)	67 (10.1%)
<b>November 2002</b>	19 (6.1%)	27 (7.1%)	18 (5.9%)	31 (8.0%)	6 (6.1%)	49 (7.4%)
<b>December 2002</b>	23 (7.3%)	26 (6.9%)	20 (6.6%)	24 (6.2%)	3 (3.1%)	53 (8.0%)
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Quarter</b>	<b>69 (22.0%)</b>	<b>82 (21.6%)</b>	<b>58 (19.1%)</b>	<b>93 (24.0%)</b>	<b>19 (19.4%)</b>	<b>169 (25.5%)</b>
<b>January 2003</b>	20 (6.4%)	30 (7.9%)	21 (6.9%)	35 (9.1%)	8 (8.2%)	39 (5.9%)
<b>February 2003</b>	24 (7.7%)	31 (8.2%)	36 (11.8%)	24 (6.2%)	10 (10.2%)	57 (8.6%)
<b>March 2003</b>	38 (12.1%)	32 (8.4%)	19 (6.2%)	35 (9.1%)	10 (10.2%)	60 (9.0%)
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter</b>	<b>82 (26.2%)</b>	<b>93 (24.5%)</b>	<b>76 (24.9%)</b>	<b>94 (24.4%)</b>	<b>28 (28.6%)</b>	<b>156 (23.5%)</b>
<b>April 2003</b>	22 (7.0%)	29 (7.7%)	19 (6.2%)	36 (9.3%)	13 (13.3%)	55 (8.3%)
<b>May 2003</b>	24 (7.7%)	30 (7.9%)	30 (9.8%)	31 (8.0%)	6 (6.1%)	52 (7.8%)
<b>June 2003</b>	34 (10.9%)	57 (15.0%)	40 (13.1%)	27 (7.0%)	8 (8.2%)	48 (7.2%)
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter</b>	<b>80 (25.6%)</b>	<b>116 (30.6%)</b>	<b>89 (29.1%)</b>	<b>94 (24.4%)</b>	<b>27 (27.6%)</b>	<b>155 (23.3%)</b>
<b>July 2003</b>	21 (6.7%)	33 (8.7%)	24 (7.9%)	30 (7.8%)	6 (6.1%)	52 (7.8%)
<b>August 2003</b>	28 (8.9%)	29 (7.7%)	28 (9.2%)	36 (9.3%)	6 (6.1%)	62 (9.4%)
<b>September 2003</b>	33 (10.5%)	26 (6.9%)	30 (9.8%)	39 (10.1%)	12 (12.2%)	69 (10.4%)
<b>4<sup>th</sup> Quarter</b>	<b>82 (26.2%)</b>	<b>88 (23.3%)</b>	<b>82 (26.9%)</b>	<b>105 (27.2%)</b>	<b>24 (24.4%)</b>	<b>183 (27.6%)</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>379</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>386</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>663</b>

Note: Quarterly percentages may not represent the exact sum of the percentages for the individual months, due to rounding.

**Table 1. Number of Closing Cases by Month and Jurisdiction**

	Howard	Kent	Montgomery	Prince George's	Queen Anne's	St. Mary's
<b>October 2002</b>	13 (4.5%)	2 (4.3%)	86 (9.4%)	231 (7.9%)	5 (6.8%)	10 (5.5%)
<b>November 2002</b>	21 (7.3%)	7 (15.2%)	76 (8.3%)	223 (7.7%)	4 (5.4%)	9 (4.9%)
<b>December 2002</b>	18 (6.3%)	3 (6.5%)	68 (7.4%)	247 (8.5%)	5 (6.8%)	13 (7.1%)
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Quarter</b>	<b>52 (18.1%)</b>	<b>12 (26.0%)</b>	<b>230 (25.1%)</b>	<b>701 (24.1%)</b>	<b>14 (19.0%)</b>	<b>32 (17.5%)</b>
<b>January 2003</b>	25 (8.7%)	4 (8.7%)	67 (7.3%)	204 (7.0%)	7 (9.5%)	7 (3.8%)
<b>February 2003</b>	18 (6.3%)	7 (15.2%)	57 (6.2%)	237 (8.1%)	6 (8.1%)	11 (6.0%)
<b>March 2003</b>	20 (7.0%)	6 (13.0%)	64 (7.0%)	234 (8.0%)	6 (8.1%)	14 (7.7%)
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter</b>	<b>63 (22.0%)</b>	<b>17 (36.9%)</b>	<b>188 (20.5%)</b>	<b>675 (23.2%)</b>	<b>19 (25.7%)</b>	<b>32 (17.5%)</b>
<b>April 2003</b>	30 (10.5%)	3 (6.5%)	82 (9.0%)	218 (7.5%)	3 (4.1%)	18 (9.8%)
<b>May 2003</b>	34 (11.9%)	4 (8.7%)	89 (9.7%)	194 (6.7%)	6 (8.1%)	14 (7.7%)
<b>June 2003</b>	25 (8.7%)	1 (2.2%)	76 (8.3%)	295 (10.1%)	12 (16.2%)	19 (10.4%)
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter</b>	<b>89 (31.1%)</b>	<b>8 (17.4%)</b>	<b>247 (27.0%)</b>	<b>707 (24.3%)</b>	<b>21 (28.4%)</b>	<b>51 (27.9%)</b>
<b>July 2003</b>	37 (12.9%)	6 (13.0%)	101 (11.0%)	211 (7.3%)	8 (10.8%)	25 (13.7%)
<b>August 2003</b>	20 (7.0%)	2 (4.3%)	59 (6.4%)	293 (10.1%)	5 (6.8%)	16 (8.7%)
<b>September 2003</b>	25 (8.7%)	1 (2.2%)	90 (9.8%)	321 (11.0%)	7 (9.5%)	27 (14.8%)
<b>4<sup>th</sup> Quarter</b>	<b>82 (28.7%)</b>	<b>9 (19.5%)</b>	<b>250 (27.2%)</b>	<b>825 (28.4%)</b>	<b>20 (27.1%)</b>	<b>68 (37.2%)</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>286</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>915</b>	<b>2,908</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>183</b>

Note: Quarterly percentages may not represent the exact sum of the percentages for the individual months, due to rounding.

**Table 1. Number of Closing Cases by Month and Jurisdiction**

	<b>Somerset</b>	<b>Talbot</b>	<b>Washington</b>	<b>Wicomico</b>	<b>Worcester</b>	<b>Baltimore City</b>
<b>October 2002</b>	5 (3.5%)	13 (13.1%)	33 (10.2%)	38 (8.0%)	6 (6.2%)	1248 (9.1%)
<b>November 2002</b>	9 (6.4%)	3 (3.0%)	28 (8.6%)	23 (4.8%)	5 (5.2%)	1173 (8.5%)
<b>December 2002</b>	12 (8.5%)	4 (4.0%)	24 (7.4%)	39 (8.2%)	8 (8.2%)	1123 (8.2%)
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Quarter</b>	<b>26 (18.4%)</b>	<b>30 (20.1%)</b>	<b>85 (26.2%)</b>	<b>100 (21.0%)</b>	<b>19 (19.6%)</b>	<b>3544 (25.8%)</b>
<b>January 2003</b>	14 (9.9%)	9 (9.1%)	24 (7.4%)	34 (7.2%)	6 (6.2%)	1034 (7.5%)
<b>February 2003</b>	11 (7.8%)	7 (7.1%)	29 (9.0%)	31 (6.5%)	7 (7.2%)	998 (7.3%)
<b>March 2003</b>	22 (15.6%)	10 (10.1%)	31 (9.6%)	42 (8.8%)	10 (10.3%)	1204 (8.8%)
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter</b>	<b>47 (33.3%)</b>	<b>26 (26.3%)</b>	<b>84 (26.0%)</b>	<b>107 (22.5%)</b>	<b>23 (23.7%)</b>	<b>3236 (23.6%)</b>
<b>April 2003</b>	7 (5.0%)	10 (10.1%)	27 (8.3%)	41 (8.6%)	6 (6.2%)	1140 (8.3%)
<b>May 2003</b>	16 (11.3%)	7 (7.1%)	20 (6.2%)	46 (9.7%)	18 (18.6%)	1147 (8.4%)
<b>June 2003</b>	9 (6.4%)	7 (7.1%)	33 (10.2%)	38 (8.0%)	10 (10.3%)	1212 (8.8%)
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter</b>	<b>32 (22.7%)</b>	<b>24 (24.3%)</b>	<b>80 (24.7%)</b>	<b>125 (26.3%)</b>	<b>34 (35.1%)</b>	<b>3499 (25.5%)</b>
<b>July 2003</b>	16 (11.3%)	9 (9.1%)	29 (9.0%)	40 (8.4%)	6 (6.2%)	1148 (8.4%)
<b>August 2003</b>	13 (9.2%)	11 (11.1%)	24 (7.4%)	50 (10.5%)	5 (5.2%)	1147 (8.4%)
<b>September 2003</b>	7 (5.0%)	9 (9.1%)	22 (6.8%)	53 (11.2%)	10 (10.3%)	1148 (8.4%)
<b>4<sup>th</sup> Quarter</b>	<b>36 (25.5%)</b>	<b>29 (29.3%)</b>	<b>75 (23.1%)</b>	<b>143 (30.1%)</b>	<b>21 (21.7%)</b>	<b>3443 (25.2%)</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>475</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>13,722</b>

Note: Quarterly percentages may not represent the exact sum of the percentages for the individual months, due to rounding.

## **Case Closings Relative to Caseload Size: Jurisdictional Analysis**

Maryland is a comparatively small state; however, the 24 jurisdictions that comprise it are quite diverse geographically and socioeconomically. As a result, the size of each jurisdiction's welfare caseload varies dramatically, ranging from only 42 average cases per month in Kent County during the study period to 16,066 cases in Baltimore City. These differences impede our ability to compare case demographics or closing patterns unless we can be certain that each jurisdiction carries and closes cases at a similar rate relative to the statewide figures.

Table 2, following this discussion, shows that, as expected, there is a direct positive correlation between the size of each jurisdiction's caseload and the number of cases closed; as the percentage of total caseload increases, the percentage of statewide closings also increases. Figures in the first column of Table 2 (Percent of Total Closings) represent the number of closings in each jurisdiction divided by the total number of statewide closings during the study period (n=25,348). Similarly, figures in the second column (Percent of Total Caseload) were produced by dividing each jurisdiction's average monthly caseload during the year by the average total statewide caseload over the same months (n=29,148). As has been true historically, four counties (Baltimore, Montgomery, Anne Arundel, and Prince George's), and Baltimore City, accounted for the majority of welfare cases (83.8%) and also experienced the majority of case closures (82.1%) during the seventh year of welfare reform.

Some small but noteworthy changes from the sixth year include a decrease in both the percentage of cases held and closed by Baltimore City and Baltimore County, and an increase in both cases and closings in Harford, Howard, Prince George's, and



St. Mary's Counties. Baltimore City's percent of the total average annual caseload decreased from 57.7% to 55.1%, and its share of case closings fell from 57.8% to 54.1%. Likewise, Baltimore County's portion of the state's total caseload dropped from 8.5% to 7.8%, and its portion of cases closed decreased from 9.3% to 8.2%.

Howard County increased its share of annual average statewide cases by 0.3 percentage points (pp), from 0.7% to 1.0%, and correspondingly increased its portion of case closings from 0.7% to 1.1%. Harford County's share of the total caseload rose from 2.3% to 2.6%, and case closings went from 2.1% to 2.6%. St. Mary's County experienced an increase in percent of the total caseload from 0.6% to 1.0%, and in percent of case closings from 0.4% to 0.7%. Finally, Prince George's County increased its percent of the total caseload from 12.0% to 13.1% and its percent of case closings from 9.4% to 11.5%.

The third column in Table 2, labeled Difference, illustrates that during the seventh year of reform, the pattern of case closings across jurisdictions does rather closely parallel the distribution of the caseload across subdivisions during that same period. In theory and all else equal, this is what one would expect to find, that jurisdictions would have the same proportion of statewide case closings as they did of statewide active cases. A large difference between these two proportions (positive or negative) would indicate that many more cases were being closed than expected, or many fewer. This, in turn, might have procedural or managerial implications at the state or local level or both. Of course, "all else" may not be equal in the real world. Factors such as local case closing practices, the overall capabilities and staffing of local Departments of Social Services, as well as local economic conditions, economies or dis-economies of

scale and others affect both the size of local caseloads and the numbers of cases which close.

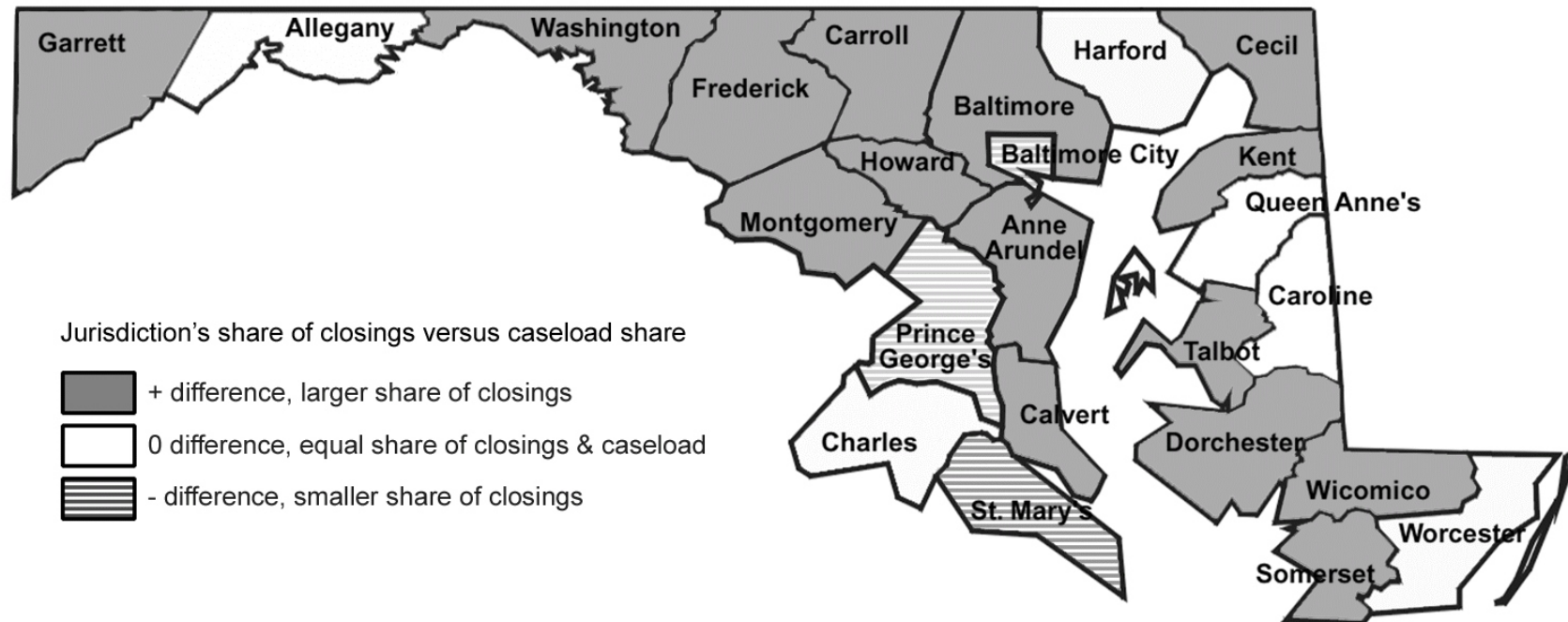
Table 2 shows only marginal differences in any jurisdiction between its share of the average annual caseload and its share of case closings in the seventh year of reform and Figure 2 makes that same point graphically. Fifteen jurisdictions accounted for a fractionally greater percentage (0.1 pp to 0.4 pp) of closings than cases. Five subdivisions accounted for exactly the same percentage of closings as cases and only three (Baltimore City, Prince George's County, St. Mary's County) accounted for slightly fewer closures than would have been anticipated based on their shares of the average annual caseload. In St. Mary's County, the difference was minuscule (-0.3 pp), in Baltimore City there was a -1.0 percentage point difference, and, in Prince George's County the difference was -1.6 percentage points. While this was the largest negative difference for the year, it must be noted that this represents a full percentage point improvement over the preceding year's statistic for that county (-2.6 pp).

**Table 2. Percent of Total Closings/Caseload by Jurisdiction: 10/02 - 9/03**

<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Percent of Total Closings</b>	<b>Percent of Total Caseload</b>	<b>Difference</b>
<b>Baltimore County</b>	<b>8.2%</b> (2,079 closings)	<b>7.8%</b> (2,264 monthly)	0.4
<b>Montgomery</b>	<b>3.6%</b> (915)	<b>3.3%</b> (953)	0.3
<b>Washington</b>	<b>1.3%</b> (324)	<b>1.0%</b> (298)	0.3
<b>Cecil</b>	<b>1.2%</b> (313)	<b>1.0%</b> (283)	0.2
<b>Anne Arundel</b>	<b>4.7%</b> (1,196)	<b>4.5%</b> (1,311)	0.2
<b>Calvert</b>	<b>0.7%</b> (171)	<b>0.5%</b> (146)	0.2
<b>Carroll</b>	<b>0.7%</b> (184)	<b>0.5%</b> (150)	0.2
<b>Frederick</b>	<b>1.5%</b> (386)	<b>1.3%</b> (385)	0.2
<b>Dorchester</b>	<b>1.2%</b> (305)	<b>1.0%</b> (301)	0.2
<b>Garrett</b>	<b>0.4%</b> (98)	<b>0.2%</b> (72)	0.2
<b>Wicomico</b>	<b>1.9%</b> (475)	<b>1.8%</b> (518)	0.1
<b>Howard</b>	<b>1.1%</b> (286)	<b>1.0%</b> (292)	0.1
<b>Somerset</b>	<b>0.6%</b> (183)	<b>0.5%</b> (131)	0.1
<b>Talbot</b>	<b>0.4%</b> (99)	<b>0.3%</b> (93)	0.1
<b>Kent</b>	<b>0.2%</b> (46)	<b>0.1%</b> (42)	0.1
<b>Queen Anne's</b>	<b>0.3%</b> (74)	<b>0.3%</b> (76)	0.0
<b>Charles</b>	<b>1.5%</b> (379)	<b>1.5%</b> (431)	0.0
<b>Harford</b>	<b>2.6%</b> (663)	<b>2.6%</b> (752)	0.0
<b>Worcester</b>	<b>0.4%</b> (97)	<b>0.4%</b> (121)	0.0
<b>Caroline</b>	<b>0.5%</b> (123)	<b>0.5%</b> (156)	0.0
<b>Allegany</b>	<b>0.7%</b> (181)	<b>0.7%</b> (216)	0.0
<b>St. Mary's</b>	<b>0.7%</b> (141)	<b>1.0%</b> (284)	-0.3
<b>Baltimore City</b>	<b>54.1%</b> (13,722)	<b>55.1%</b> (16,066)	-1.0
<b>Prince George's</b>	<b>11.5%</b> (2,908)	<b>13.1%</b> (3,807)	-1.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b> (25,348)	<b>100%</b> (29,148)	--

Note: Caseload data were calculated for this table by the authors from the *Monthly Statistical Reports* issued by the Family Investment Administration, Department of Human Resources for the period October 2002 - September 2003.

**Figure 2. Difference Between Percent of Closings and Percent of Caseload by Jurisdiction: 10/02 -- 09/03**



## **Characteristics of Exiting Cases: Statewide and Jurisdictional Analyses<sup>3</sup>**

In the next tables we change our focus from the quantity of active cases and closings throughout the state to the types of cases and payees exiting in each jurisdiction, as well as a statewide and jurisdictional analysis of the most frequent types of closings. General information about the kind of cases closed during the study period is provided in Table 3 which follows this discussion. Most families consisted of a single adult and one or two children. Likewise, assistance units, on average, were comprised of two or three persons.

### **Length of Exiting Spell**

This variable refers to the number of consecutive months cases were open before exiting.<sup>4</sup> In past reports, the data have shown that TCA cases in Maryland, as a general rule, stayed open for a relatively short time before closing. This remained true over the past year, as less than two percent (1.9%) had been on welfare for more than 60 months, compared to 2.7% in the sixth year. More than three-fourths (77.6%) of cases statewide had been active for 12 or fewer consecutive months and 14.4% of cases were closed within 13 to 24 months. In fact, virtually all exiting cases (92.0%) between October 2002 and September 2003 had been on assistance for two years or less.

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<sup>3</sup>Because of the disproportionate size of Baltimore City in terms of actual numbers of exiting cases, Table 3 presents statewide data in two forms: with the City included and with the City excluded. References to statewide figures in the text include Baltimore City.

<sup>4</sup>Readers should be aware that variations in local case closing and/or redetermination practices during the study period may influence the observed results in length of exiting spell.

Statewide, the average (mean) spell length was 11.75 months, compared to 13.4 months in the prior year. Across the 24 jurisdictions, Cecil County had the shortest average spell length (7.44 months), and Kent County had the highest (16.96 months). The median is another measure that is useful for our analyses because, unlike the mean, it is not as easily affected by extremes (i.e., when someone remains on welfare for an unusually short or long time). Garrett County had the shortest median spell length at 3.19 months, meaning that half of its exiting cases had been on welfare for less than three months before exiting. St. Mary's County had the longest median spell length (9.46 months).

#### **Number of Adults in the Assistance Unit**

Historically, case closing data have shown that, consistent with the profile of the overall caseload, most households leaving cash assistance in Maryland are single adult families with one or two children. This same pattern prevailed in the seventh year. Statewide, approximately three-quarters, or 76.7%, of welfare cases that closed between October 2002 and September 2003 contained only one adult. In all jurisdictions the majority of case closings were single adult cases. Even in the subdivision with the lowest percentage of single adult exiting families (Allegany County), fully three-fifths of all cases (60.7%) contained only one adult. Baltimore City had the highest percentage of one-adult cases among all 24 jurisdictions (80.3%).

The second most common type of closing case had no adult in the assistance unit at the time the case was closed. Approximately one-fifth (20.4%) of all closures statewide were of this type, usually referred to as child-only cases. In general, such cases may include children living with relatives who are not eligible for services, or

children who live with a parent who is ineligible for assistance due to immigration status or because they receive other benefits such as Supplemental Security Income (Farrell, et al., 2000). Among the 24 local jurisdictions, Washington County had the highest percentage of child-only case closings (32.3%), and Garrett County had the lowest (8.2%). In 17 of the other 22 jurisdictions, child-only cases represented between 20 to 30 percent of case closings.

Two-parent families were scarce among Year Seven exiters, making up less than three percent of the sample statewide (2.9%). Garrett County, which had the lowest percentage of child-only exiting cases and a moderate percentage of single parent exiting families, had the highest percentage of two-parent families by almost seven percentage points (16.5%) compared to other jurisdictions. Allegany (9.6%) and Cecil Counties (9.0%) also had noticeably higher percentages of two-parent families than the statewide average (2.9%). Worcester County had no two-parent cases among this year's exiters; in most other jurisdictions two-parent families represented between four and five percent of total case closings.

#### **Number of Children in the Assistance Unit and Size of Assistance Unit**

Almost half of Maryland's TCA cases closing in Year Seven included only one child in the assistance unit (47.2%). The median assistance unit size statewide was 2.0 persons, most consisting of one adult and one child. In total, over half (54.9%) of the 25,348 TCA cases which closed between October 2002 and September 2003 included one or two persons. The percentage of cases with an assistance unit size of one was 16.4%, though the percentage of cases closed with no children in the household was

only 3.5%. This indicates that most one-person assistance units which closed were child-only cases.

In all 24 jurisdictions, almost all closing cases contained at least one child. Even in the subdivision with the lowest proportion of cases containing one or more children (Allegany County), fully 94.9% of cases did include at least one youngster. In all 24 jurisdictions also, the most common situation among exiting cases was where there was only one child in the assistance unit. However, percentages of one-child cases ranged from a high of 64.4% in Kent County to a low of 41.2% in Garrett County.

Roughly one in five exiting cases statewide (21.3%) had three or more children in the assistance unit at the time of exit, but this statewide figure masks considerable variation among jurisdictions. To illustrate, among Washington County exiting cases only 11.6% or roughly one in 10 contained three or more children; at the other extreme, in Carroll (24.4% ) and Calvert (24.0%) counties, roughly one in four exiting cases contained three or more children. It is perhaps worth noting also that, in eight of 24 jurisdictions, including those with the largest caseloads, approximately one in five exiting cases contained at least three children. These subdivisions are the counties of Anne Arundel, Charles, Garrett, Harford, Montgomery, Prince George's and Wicomico and the City of Baltimore.

In terms of overall assistance unit size, regardless of whether its members are children or adults, the statewide median or mid-point size, as previously mentioned, was 2.0 persons; the mean or average size was 2.6 persons. Both figures are virtually unchanged from previous years. There was not a great deal of cross-county variation on either the mean or median size of the assistance unit nor in the size of the modal



family leaving cash assistance. In 22 of 24 subdivisions, the most common situation was that of a two person assistance unit. However, in Caroline County, there were just as many three person (32.2%) as two person assistance units (32.2%) among closing cases and, in Garrett County, three person assistance units (36.1%) were more common than two person units (27.8%).

**Table 3. Closing Case Characteristics By Jurisdiction - (October 2002 - September 2003)**

	<b>Allegany</b>	<b>Anne Arundel</b>	<b>Baltimore County</b>	<b>Calvert</b>	<b>Caroline</b>	<b>Carroll</b>
<b>Number of Closing Cases (Unique)</b>	181	1196	2079	171	123	184
<b>Length of Exiting Spell</b>						
12 months or less	76.8%	82.8%	80.4%	80.1%	75.6%	86.4%
13-24 months	11.6%	10.9%	11.8%	15.2%	17.1%	9.8%
25-36 months	3.9%	3.6%	2.8%	2.9%	3.3%	1.1%
37-48 months	1.1%	1.2%	1.8%	1.8%	0.0%	1.1%
49-60 months	1.7%	0.3%	0.9%	0.0%	0.8%	0.5%
more than 60 months	5.0%	1.3%	2.2%	0.0%	3.3%	1.1%
Mean spell length (months)	13.73	9.65	10.76	8.19	11.77	7.48
Median spell length (months)	5.72	5.93	5.75	4.83	5.69	4.29
Range (months)	1 - 215	1 - 187	1 - 213	1 - 43	1 - 168	1 - 81
<b>Number of Adults</b>						
0 (Child Only)	29.8%	24.0%	27.7%	19.2%	24.0%	14.4%
1	60.7%	71.9%	70.1%	75.4%	68.6%	78.3%
2	9.6%	4.1%	2.1%	5.4%	7.4%	7.2%
<b>Number of Children</b>						
0	5.1%	4.1%	3.2%	0.6%	3.3%	2.2%
1	48.3%	49.2%	51.6%	48.5%	47.1%	46.7%
2	27.5%	26.5%	27.1%	26.9%	34.7%	26.7%
3 or more	19.1%	20.2%	18.0%	24.0%	14.9%	24.4%
<b>Size of Assistance Unit</b>						
1	21.3%	20.5%	21.4%	12.0%	20.7%	13.3%
2	38.8%	36.4%	38.7%	40.7%	32.2%	36.7%
3	20.8%	23.3%	23.9%	24.0%	32.2%	22.8%
4 or more	19.1%	19.7%	16.0%	23.4%	14.9%	27.2%
Mean Assistance Unit Size	2.49	2.54	2.42	2.67	2.47	2.82
Median Assistance Unit Size	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.5
Range	1 - 11	1 - 9	1 - 12	1 - 6	1 - 6	1 - 7

**Table 3. Closing Case Characteristics By Jurisdiction - (October 2002 - September 2003)**

	<b>Cecil</b>	<b>Charles</b>	<b>Dorchester</b>	<b>Frederick</b>	<b>Garrett</b>	<b>Harford</b>	<b>Howard</b>
<b>Number of Closing Cases (Unique)</b>	313	379	305	386	98	663	286
<b>Length of Exiting Spell</b>							
12 months or less	85.9%	78.1%	75.1%	81.3%	83.7%	79.0%	83.2%
13-24 months	10.9%	15.0%	14.1%	11.1%	10.2%	13.4%	9.8%
25-36 months	2.2%	1.3%	4.3%	4.1%	2.0%	2.7%	3.1%
37-48 months	0.3%	2.4%	1.0%	1.3%	0.0%	1.5%	1.4%
49-60 months	0.0%	0.0%	1.3%	0.0%	2.0%	1.1%	0.3%
more than 60 months	0.6%	3.2%	4.3%	2.1%	2.0%	2.3%	2.1%
Mean spell length (months)	7.44	12.30	13.10	10.56	9.48	11.79	9.21
Median spell length (months)	4.57	5.98	5.69	6.57	3.19	7.30	4.52
Range (months)	1 - 87	1 - 213	1 - 196	1 - 159	1 - 169	1 - 213	1 - 120
<b>Number of Adults</b>							
0 (Child Only)	22.8%	21.8%	24.1%	20.1%	8.2%	19.0%	18.3%
1	68.2%	73.9%	72.2%	75.5%	75.3%	73.8%	76.1%
2	9.0%	4.3%	3.7%	4.4%	16.5%	7.1%	5.6%
<b>Number of Children</b>							
0	3.9%	2.7%	2.4%	1.6%	3.1%	2.0%	2.8%
1	45.7%	46.0%	52.2%	49.5%	41.2%	45.2%	48.9%
2	32.5%	30.3%	26.1%	31.8%	36.1%	32.6%	31.0%
3 or more	18.0%	21.0%	19.3%	17.2%	19.6%	20.2%	17.3%
<b>Size of Assistance Unit</b>							
1	16.7%	15.7%	18.3%	12.8%	10.3%	13.4%	13.4%
2	37.9%	37.5%	41.0%	43.8%	27.8%	36.7%	43.0%
3	25.1%	26.6%	22.0%	26.3%	36.1%	28.9%	25.4%
4 or more	20.3%	20.2%	18.6%	17.2%	25.8%	21.0%	18.3%
Mean Assistance Unit Size	2.62	2.67	2.51	2.54	2.83	2.72	2.57
Median Assistance Unit Size	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	3.00	2.00	2.00
Range	1 - 8	1 - 10	1 - 8	1 - 7	1 - 5	1 - 8	1 - 7

**Table 3. Closing Case Characteristics By Jurisdiction - (October 2002 - September 2003)**

	Kent	Montgomery	Prince George's	Queen Anne's	St. Mary's	Somerset	Talbot
<b>Number of Closing Cases</b> (Unique)	46	915	2908	74	183	141	99
<b>Length of Exiting Spell</b>							
12 months or less	71.7%	76.7%	70.2%	74.3%	71.6%	69.5%	79.8%
13-24 months	13.0%	13.2%	17.8%	18.9%	16.4%	22.7%	6.1%
25-36 months	4.3%	3.3%	5.3%	2.7%	3.8%	2.8%	3.0%
37-48 months	0.0%	2.2%	3.3%	1.4%	3.8%	2.8%	5.1%
49-60 months	0.0%	1.3%	1.2%	0.0%	2.7%	0.7%	2.0%
more than 60 months	10.9%	3.3%	2.2%	2.7%	1.6%	1.4%	4.0%
Mean spell length (months)	16.96	11.94	13.47	10.56	13.86	11.25	13.02
Median spell length (months)	4.91	5.72	9.09	6.54	9.46	5.42	5.06
Range (months)	1 - 127	1 - 198	1 - 213	1 - 84	1 - 136	1 - 166	1 - 106
<b>Number of Adults</b>							
0 (Child Only)	28.9%	23.6%	21.2%	23.3%	29.0%	29.8%	31.3%
1	64.4%	70.7%	75.7%	72.6%	66.1%	63.1%	66.7%
2	6.7%	5.7%	3.1%	4.1%	4.9%	7.1%	2.0%
<b>Number of Children</b>							
0	0.0%	1.6%	4.5%	4.1%	1.1%	1.4%	2.0%
1	64.4%	44.8%	45.3%	47.9%	45.9%	50.4%	53.5%
2	22.2%	31.4%	26.2%	32.9%	33.9%	30.5%	26.3%
3 or more	13.3%	22.2%	23.9%	15.1%	19.1%	17.7%	18.2%
<b>Size of Assistance Unit</b>							
1	26.7%	14.7%	17.9%	17.8%	18.0%	17.7%	20.2%
2	35.6%	38.4%	36.2%	41.1%	39.3%	41.8%	42.4%
3	24.4%	24.4%	23.1%	24.7%	22.4%	22.7%	21.2%
4 or more	13.3%	22.6%	22.9%	16.4%	20.2%	17.7%	16.2%
Mean Assistance Unit Size	2.29	2.70	2.67	2.49	2.60	2.50	2.39
Median Assistance Unit Size	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00
Range	1 - 6	1 - 9	1 - 12	1 - 8	1 - 8	1 - 7	1 - 6

**Table 3. Closing Case Characteristics By Jurisdiction - (October 2002 - September 2003)**

	Washington	Wicomico	Worcester	Baltimore City	Maryland with Balt City	Maryland without Balt City
<b>Number of Closing Cases (Unique)</b>	324	475	97	13,722	25,348	11,626
<b>Length of Exiting Spell</b>						
12 months or less	84.3%	81.9%	80.4%	77.6%	77.6%	77.6%
13-24 months	9.3%	10.6%	12.4%	15.0%	14.4%	13.6%
25-36 months	1.5%	2.9%	2.1%	3.6%	3.6%	3.6%
37-48 months	1.2%	1.6%	2.1%	1.4%	1.7%	2.0%
49-60 months	0.9%	0.6%	0.0%	0.8%	0.9%	0.9%
more than 60 months	2.8%	2.5%	3.1%	1.6%	1.9%	2.3%
Mean spell length (months)	10.47	11.33	10.73	11.94	11.75	11.52
Median spell length (months)	4.88	5.92	5.78	8.77	7.76	6.61
Range (months)	1 - 173	1 - 163	1 - 113	1 - 459	1 - 459	1 - 215
<b>Number of Adults</b>						
0 (Child Only)	32.3%	24.2%	24.0%	17.8%	20.4%	23.5%
1	64.9%	72.8%	76.0%	80.3%	76.7%	72.4%
2	2.8%	3.0%	0.0%	1.9%	2.9%	4.2%
<b>Number of Children</b>						
0	1.9%	3.4%	0.0%	3.8%	3.5%	3.2%
1	58.6%	43.0%	57.3%	46.5%	47.2%	47.9%
2	28.2%	31.9%	29.2%	27.6%	28.0%	28.5%
3 or more	11.6%	21.6%	13.5%	22.0%	21.3%	20.4%
<b>Size of Assistance Unit</b>						
1	25.1%	16.9%	14.6%	15.0%	16.4%	18.0%
2	41.1%	36.4%	49.0%	39.0%	38.5%	38.0%
3	23.2%	26.15	25.0%	24.9%	24.6%	24.3%
4 or more	10.7%	20.6%	11.5%	21.1%	20.5%	19.8%
Mean Assistance Unit Size	2.27	2.63	2.38	2.65	2.62	2.58
Median Assistance Unit Size	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00
Range	1 - 9	1 - 9	1 - 7	1 - 11	1 - 12	1 - 12

## **Characteristics of Exiting Payees: Statewide and Jurisdictional Analyses<sup>5</sup>**

Payee and household demographics are presented in Table 4. Information on race, gender, and age help to reveal commonalities, if any, among caseload exits statewide, as well as to highlight differences among Maryland's 24 jurisdictions. Overall, there were very few changes from data presented in the previous reports statewide and only a few notable changes locally.

### **Race and Gender of Payee**

Statewide, the typical payee who left cash assistance in the seventh year was African-American (79.4%) and female (95.1%). There was little variation across jurisdictions in terms of the gender distribution of payees; in all 24 jurisdictions more than nine of every 10 exiting payees were female. Sub-state differences were evident, however, with regard to ethnicity. For example, in two jurisdictions more than 90% of all exiting payees were Caucasian (Allegany and Garrett Counties) and in two others (Baltimore City and Prince George's County) more than 90% of exiting payees were African-American.

In eight generally rural and smaller counties (Allegany, Caroline, Carroll, Cecil, Frederick, Garrett, Queen Anne's, and Washington), half or more of all exiting payees were Caucasian and in two counties (Calvert and Harford) there was a fairly even split between Caucasians and African-Americans. In 14 subdivisions, including the largest and most urbanized jurisdictions (the counties of Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Charles,

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<sup>5</sup>Because of the disproportionate size of Baltimore City in terms of actual numbers of exiting cases, Table 4 presents statewide data in two forms: with the City included and with the City excluded. References to statewide figures in the text include Baltimore City.

Dorchester, Howard, Kent, Montgomery, Prince George's, St. Mary's, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico, Worcester and Baltimore City), the majority of exiting payees were African-American.

Although prior year data do not appear in today's report, we observed notable changes from last year in the ethnic profile of exiting payees in three counties (Calvert, St. Mary's and Somerset). In both Calvert and St. Mary's counties the percentage of African-American exiting payees increased (by roughly 10% in each jurisdiction), while in Somerset County the percentage of African-Americans among exiters decreased by roughly 10%.

### **Age of Payee**

The average age of exiting payees during the October 2002 - September 2003 period was 33.8 years, roughly three months less than the average age in the preceding year. In all 24 jurisdictions also, the typical exiting payee was in her early to mid-thirties; average ages ranged from 32.1 years in Garrett County to 36.2 years in Montgomery County. Overall, exiting payees ranged in age from 17 years to 86 years.

### **Age at First Birth**<sup>6</sup>

Statewide, the typical exiting payee in the seventh year of reform was just about 22 years old (mean 21.9 years) when she gave birth to her first child. Just about one of every two payees (52.6%) had given birth before the age of 21 years and about one in five (19.3%) statewide had her first child before her 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. Consistent with prior

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<sup>6</sup>Estimates of age at first birth for female payees were calculated using the payee's date of birth and the date of birth of her oldest child included in the assistance unit. Our calculations underestimate the prevalence of early child-bearing if payees have another older child who is not in the assistance unit.

years' findings, there was little variation across jurisdictions in the estimated average age at first birth; the range was from 24.2 years in Montgomery County to 20.7 years in Caroline and Dorchester counties.

Median age at first birth statewide was somewhat lower (20.1 years) and indicates that half of exiting payees gave birth when 20.1 years of age or younger and half did not. In three subdivisions (Caroline and Dorchester counties and Baltimore City), median age at first birth was lower than the statewide figure (19.3 in Caroline, 19.1 in Dorchester, and 19.6 in Baltimore City).

There was considerable variation across the state in the proportion of exiting payees who had children at a relatively young age. Statewide, as noted, 52.6% had given birth before age 21; the range across subdivisions was 29.9% in Montgomery County to 68.4% in Caroline County. Similarly, while one in five (19.3%) exiting payees statewide had given birth before age 18, this percentage varied from 9.1% in Kent County to 31.4% in Dorchester County.

### **Age of Youngest Child**

The average age of the youngest child in exiting families during the most recent year was just under six years of age (5.9 years), slightly younger than the average for cases which exited in the year before (6.1 years). The median or midpoint age of the youngest child, statewide, was noticeably lower at 4.3 years, meaning that half of all children in exiting cases were less than four and one-half years old. Roughly two of five exiting cases (39.7%) contained at least one youngster under the age of three years. All of these statewide figures are in line with those reported for the previous year.



In the large majority of jurisdictions, the average age of the youngest child in exiting cases was roughly between five and six years of age, perhaps not coincidentally the age when children are eligible to begin kindergarten or first grade. Average ages of the youngest children varied from a low of 4.5 years in Washington County to a high of 6.8 years in Queen Anne's County.

**Table 4. Household Characteristics By Jurisdiction - (October 2002 - September 2003)**

	<b>Allegany</b>	<b>Anne Arundel</b>	<b>Baltimore County</b>	<b>Calvert</b>	<b>Caroline</b>	<b>Carroll</b>
<b>Number of Closing Cases (Unique)</b>	181	1,196	2,079	171	123	184
<b>% Caucasian</b>	90.5%	45.2%	31.4%	47.0%	55.0%	81.7%
<b>% African American</b>	8.4%	51.7%	65.6%	49.4%	41.7%	16.1%
<b>% Female</b>	90.1%	94.6%	95.1%	90.1%	95.9%	95.6%
<b>% Male</b>	9.9%	5.4%	4.9%	9.9%	4.1%	4.4%
<b>Age of Payee</b>						
Mean	33.56	34.42	33.59	33.23	32.46	32.59
Median	33.17	33.05	31.16	30.99	28.94	30.35
Std. Dev.	10.99	11.60	11.86	11.59	12.42	9.97
Range (years)	17 - 63	18 - 79	17 - 83	17 - 81	18 - 76	18 - 71
<b>Estimated Age at First Birth</b>						
Mean	23.21	22.51	22.19	21.76	20.80	23.13
Median	24.49	20.61	20.43	20.77	19.37	21.53
Std. Dev.	5.60	5.70	5.73	4.44	4.70	5.52
Range (years)	14 - 40	13 - 46	13 - 49	15 - 40	14 - 40	15 - 41
<b>% who gave birth before 18</b>	10.2%	19.1%	22.5%	15.0%	25.5%	11.3%
<b>% who gave birth before 21</b>	46.7%	53.4%	56.2%	52.6%	68.4%	46.3%
<b>Age of youngest child</b>						
<b>Mean</b>	5.22	5.69	5.59	5.62	5.91	4.88
<b>Median</b>	2.78	3.86	3.56	3.86	4.59	3.14
<b>Std. Dev.</b>	5.14	5.02	5.16	5.04	5.13	4.87
<b>Range</b>	< 1yr - 18	< 1yr - 18	< 1yr - 18	< 1yr - 17	< 1yr - 18	< 1yr - 18
<b>% cases with a child under 3</b>	51.2%	43.3%	45.3%	41.6%	39.3%	48.6%

**Table 4. Household Characteristics By Jurisdiction - (October 2002 - September 2003)**

	<b>Cecil</b>	<b>Charles</b>	<b>Dorchester</b>	<b>Frederick</b>	<b>Garrett</b>	<b>Harford</b>	<b>Howard</b>
<b>Number of Closing Cases</b> (Unique)	313	379	305	386	98	663	286
<b>% Caucasian</b>	76.6%	32.1%	24.6%	51.4%	100.0%	48.6%	29.0%
<b>% African American</b>	21.1%	66.6%	72.4%	43.6%	0.0%	47.3%	66.2%
<b>% Female</b>	93.9%	96.3%	94.8%	91.7%	93.9%	92.9%	93.7%
<b>% Male</b>	6.1%	3.7%	5.2%	8.3%	6.1%	7.1%	6.3%
<b>Age of Payee</b>							
Mean	33.06	33.91	32.97	33.90	32.12	33.98	34.73
Median	32.39	32.46	30.78	31.52	29.83	31.84	33.79
Std. Dev.	9.67	11.09	11.76	11.63	10.57	11.66	10.95
Range (years)	19 - 66	18 - 78	19 - 73	19 - 85	19 - 67	18 - 81	19 - 80
<b>Estimated Age First Birth</b>							
Mean	22.17	22.31	20.79	22.93	22.50	22.33	23.58
Median	20.46	20.54	19.19	21.19	21.27	20.65	21.58
Std. Dev.	5.24	5.30	4.94	5.63	5.07	5.42	6.39
Range (years)	12 - 40	13 - 42	13 - 43	14 - 43	15 - 41	13 - 44	15 - 43
<b>% who gave birth before 18</b>	18.4%	18.3%	31.4%	15.2%	11.8%	18.8%	17.5%
<b>% who gave birth before 21</b>	55.6%	54.2%	66.1%	48.0%	49.4%	51.8%	45.2%
<b>Age of youngest child</b>							
Mean	6.22	6.16	6.40	5.46	5.40	5.73	6.20
Median	4.84	4.72	5.12	3.32	3.90	3.80	5.11
Std. Dev.	4.98	5.20	5.44	5.06	4.84	5.14	4.79
Range	< 1yr - 18	< 1yr - 18	< 1yr - 18	< 1yr - 18	< 1yr - 17	< 1yr - 18	< 1yr - 18
<b>% cases with a child under 3</b>	35.4%	38.5%	41.3%	45.9%	44.1%	44.5%	34.1%

**Table 4. Household Characteristics By Jurisdiction - (October 2002 - September 2003)**

	Kent	Montgomery	Prince George's	Queen Anne's	St. Mary's	Somerset	Talbot
<b>Number of Closing Cases (Unique)</b>	46	915	2,908	74	183	141	99
<b>% Caucasian</b>	41.3%	16.4%	3.7%	52.1%	40.2%	42.9%	30.9%
<b>% African American</b>	56.5%	67.8%	93.9%	47.9%	57.0%	55.7%	68.1%
<b>% Female</b>	91.3%	94.5%	95.0%	97.3%	95.1%	91.5%	94.9%
<b>% Male</b>	8.7%	5.5%	5.0%	2.7%	4.9%	8.5%	5.1%
<b>Age of Payee</b>							
<b>Mean</b>	35.36	36.23	34.59	34.87	34.84	34.02	35.69
<b>Median</b>	30.79	34.86	32.51	33.60	32.64	32.68	33.58
<b>Std. Dev.</b>	12.42	11.59	11.49	12.13	12.27	12.21	13.62
<b>Range (years)</b>	20 - 63	17 - 82	18 - 86	19 - 80	19 - 75	17 - 72	19 - 78
<b>Estimated Age at First Birth</b>							
<b>Mean</b>	22.79	24.27	22.35	22.23	22.36	22.77	22.38
<b>Median</b>	20.61	22.59	20.64	20.63	20.50	20.58	20.69
<b>Std. Dev.</b>	5.99	6.53	5.59	4.86	5.39	6.18	5.73
<b>Range (years)</b>	16 - 42	15 - 48	11 - 48	14 - 40	14 - 40	14 - 46	14 - 37
<b>% who gave birth before 18</b>	9.1%	14.4%	20.8%	13.8%	19.0%	20.0%	19.2%
<b>% who gave birth before 21</b>	54.5%	39.9%	53.0%	53.4%	52.6%	52.4%	54.8%
<b>Age of youngest child</b>							
<b>Mean</b>	6.55	6.07	6.26	6.80	6.19	5.28	6.27
<b>Median</b>	5.09	4.40	4.84	4.47	3.82	3.48	3.79
<b>Std. Dev.</b>	5.41	5.01	5.04	5.71	5.47	5.14	5.48
<b>Range</b>	< 1yr - 18	< 1yr - 18	< 1yr - 18	< 1yr - 18	< 1yr - 18	< 1yr - 18	< 1yr - 18
<b>% cases with a child under 3</b>	37.8%	38.6%	38.4%	35.7%	42.2%	47.8%	39.4%

**Table 4. Household Characteristics By Jurisdiction - (October 2002 - September 2003)**

	Washington	Wicomico	Worcester	Baltimore City	Maryland with Balt City	Maryland without Balt City
<b>Number of Closing Cases</b> (Unique)	324	475	97	13,722	25,348	11,626
<b>% Caucasian</b>	67.9%	28.4%	45.8%	7.1%	18.5%	32.0%
<b>% African American</b>	30.2%	69.0%	54.2%	92.2%	79.4%	64.2%
<b>% Female</b>	92.9%	95.6%	95.9%	95.7%	95.1%	94.5%
<b>% Male</b>	7.1%	4.4%	4.1%	4.3%	4.9%	5.5%
<b>Age of Payee</b>						
Mean	34.03	33.58	32.72	33.54	33.84	34.19
Median	29.93	29.68	30.27	31.14	31.68	32.23
Std. Dev.	13.3	12.91	11.88	11.69	11.69	11.69
Range (years)	18 - 79	18 - 83	19 - 78	17 - 86	17 - 86	17 - 86
<b>Estimated Age at First Birth</b>						
Mean	22.82	21.62	21.41	21.46	21.92	22.49
Median	21.05	20.22	20.56	19.63	20.13	20.69
Std. Dev.	5.60	5.07	4.03	5.66	5.69	5.67
Range (years)	13 - 44	14 - 43	15 - 38	11 - 49	11 - 49	11 - 49
<b>% who gave birth before 18</b>	9.8%	23.1%	17.9%	30.5%	25.5%	19.3%
<b>% who gave birth before 21</b>	49.6%	58.8%	55.1%	61.3%	57.4%	52.6%
<b>Age of youngest child</b>						
Mean	4.50	4.97	5.25	6.11	5.98	5.83
Median	1.95	2.93	2.76	4.45	4.32	4.01
Std. Dev.	5.04	4.89	5.22	4.90	4.99	5.10
Range	< 1yr - 18	< 1yr - 18	< 1yr - 18	< 1yr - 18	< 1yr - 18	< 1yr - 18
<b>% cases with a child under 3</b>	56.9%	50.9%	50.5%	37.3%	39.7%	42.4%

## **Administrative Reasons for Case Closure: Statewide and Jurisdictional Analyses**

Having examined who left welfare during the seventh year of reform and how long they had received cash assistance, we now examine why they left. Within the administrative data system multiple codes are used to record the reason for case closure. It should be noted, however, that these codes do not always fully represent the situations behind families' exits from cash assistance. Nonetheless, it is still useful to track possible trends that may appear statewide or may emerge jurisdictionally. Results for Year Seven are presented graphically in Figure 3, and numerically in Appendix B.

This year, statewide data mirrored trends evident in the sixth year of reform. The top five reasons for closure were the same, in the same order, though the proportions of each varied slightly. It must be noted at the outset, however, that the top reason for case closure, "no recertification/no redetermination" almost certainly includes some cases where the payee obtained employment but did not inform the caseworker and did not come back to renew their grant (Ovwigbo, et al., 2003). Of all case closings statewide, this reason accounted for 24.5% or about one in four of Year Seven closures. This compares to 27.2% of all closures in Year Six. The second most common reason for closure was "income above limit (including started work)", accounting for 20.5% of all closures. Together, these two codes explain 44.5% of the state's closures. The third most frequent type of closure was a full-family "work sanction" for noncompliance with work requirements; this was the recorded closing reason in 19.6% of cases. The final two of the "top five" reasons for case closure included "eligibility/verification information not provided" and "not eligible", as in the past. Consistent with prior years' findings,

these five reasons, together, accounted for 84.7% of all administratively recorded case closure reasons between October 2002 and September 2003.

Compared to other states, Maryland has made sparing use of full-family sanctions, that is the termination of families' entire cash assistance payments because of the adult's failure to cooperate or comply with program requirements, particularly those related to work participation and child support enforcement. Nevertheless, the percentage of cases closed due to work sanctions has steadily increased since we began this tracking study in October 1996. The upward trend began to be noticeable between the fifth and sixth years of reform. In both the fourth (2000) and fifth (2001) years, work sanctions accounted for 16.9% of all administratively-recorded case closing reasons. In the sixth year (2002), work sanctions represented 18.2% of all closures and, as noted previously, in this seventh year of reform (October 2002 - September 2003) account for about one of five closures (19.6%). Given the increased emphasis on universal engagement and the near certainty that work expectations will increase when the federal welfare reform legislation is finally authorized, it will be very important to continue to pay attention to the use of work sanctions.

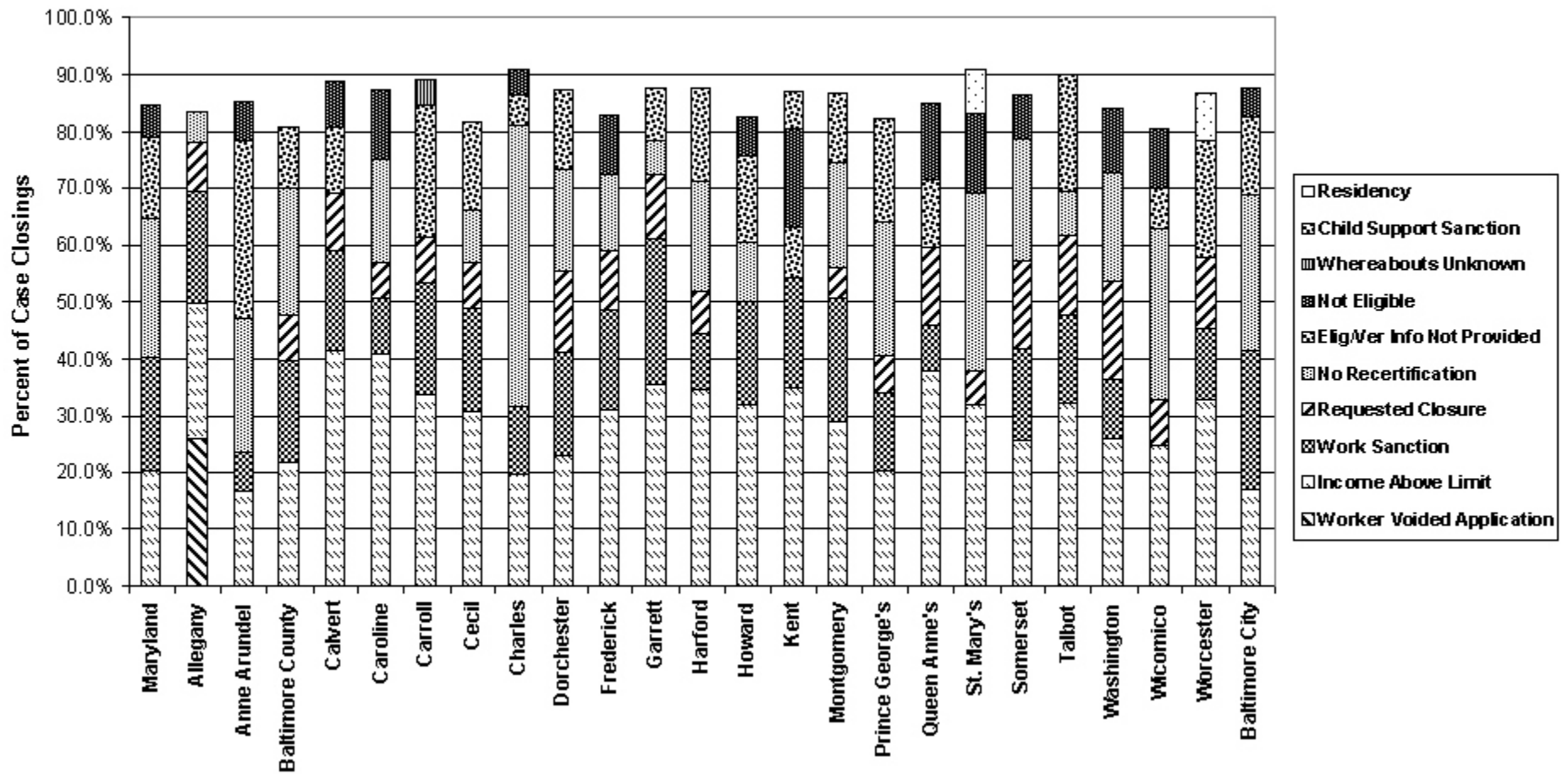
In terms of the most common case closing reasons at the sub-state level, findings are similar to those for the previous year. In 16 of 24 jurisdictions, the most common closure code was "income above limit/started work". In six jurisdictions (the counties of Baltimore, Charles, Prince George's, St. Mary's and Wicomico and Baltimore City), the most common closure code was "no recertification/no redetermination". Two of these jurisdictions (Baltimore City and Prince George's County) have the largest cash assistance caseloads, together accounting for roughly

68.2% of the statewide caseload and also accounted for 65.6% of all exits during Year Seven. Thus, while the majority of jurisdictions (16 of 24) most commonly saw cases leave because of increased income or work, the size of these two jurisdictions' caseloads causes the #1 statewide reason to be "no recertification/no redetermination".

Two jurisdictions had unique patterns vis-a-vis their most common administratively-recorded reason for case closure. In Allegany County the most common reason this year, as in the previous two years was "worker voided application". In Anne Arundel County, both this year and last, the most commonly-recorded case closure code was "eligibility/verification information not provided". Another notable finding is that, unique among all 24 jurisdictions, child support sanctions are among the top five case closure reasons this year in Kent County, accounting for 6.5% of all closures during the year. This is the third consecutive year in which child support sanctions have been among the top five reasons in this jurisdiction.



Figure 3: Top 5 Case Closing Reasons



## **Full Family Sanctions: Statewide and Jurisdictional Analyses<sup>7</sup>**

The practice of full family sanctioning, cessation of the entire cash assistance grant due to non-cooperation by the adult recipient(s) with certain specified program rules, was first utilized in Maryland as part of welfare reform circa 1996. Here, as in other states which adopted the practice, it has been controversial and has been an area we have closely monitored in this and our other welfare reform research projects. Figure 4, following this discussion, and Appendix C present graphic and numeric findings concerning the use of full family sanctions in Maryland during the seventh year of welfare reform (October 2002 - September 2003).

Statewide, full family sanctions accounted for about one of every five administratively-recorded case closure reasons ( $n=5,639$  or 22.2%); 19.2% of all closures were for work sanctions ( $n=4,973$ ) and 2.6% ( $n=666$ ) were due to child support sanctions. Expressed another way, of all sanctions imposed during Year Seven ( $n=5,639$ ), the vast majority (88.2%,  $n=4,973/5,639$ ) were for non-compliance with work requirements.

Patterns were similar at the subdivision level. In all 23 subdivisions in which at least one case was sanctioned during the study period, work sanctions were more common than child support sanctions, usually by a wide margin.<sup>8</sup> The percentages of

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<sup>7</sup>More specific examination of sanction-specific administrative codes revealed that among all work-sanctioned cases, 60.5% were experiencing their first work sanction. About three percent (3.1%) were being work sanctioned for the third time and not quite one in four (23.4%) were experiencing their second work-related full family sanction..

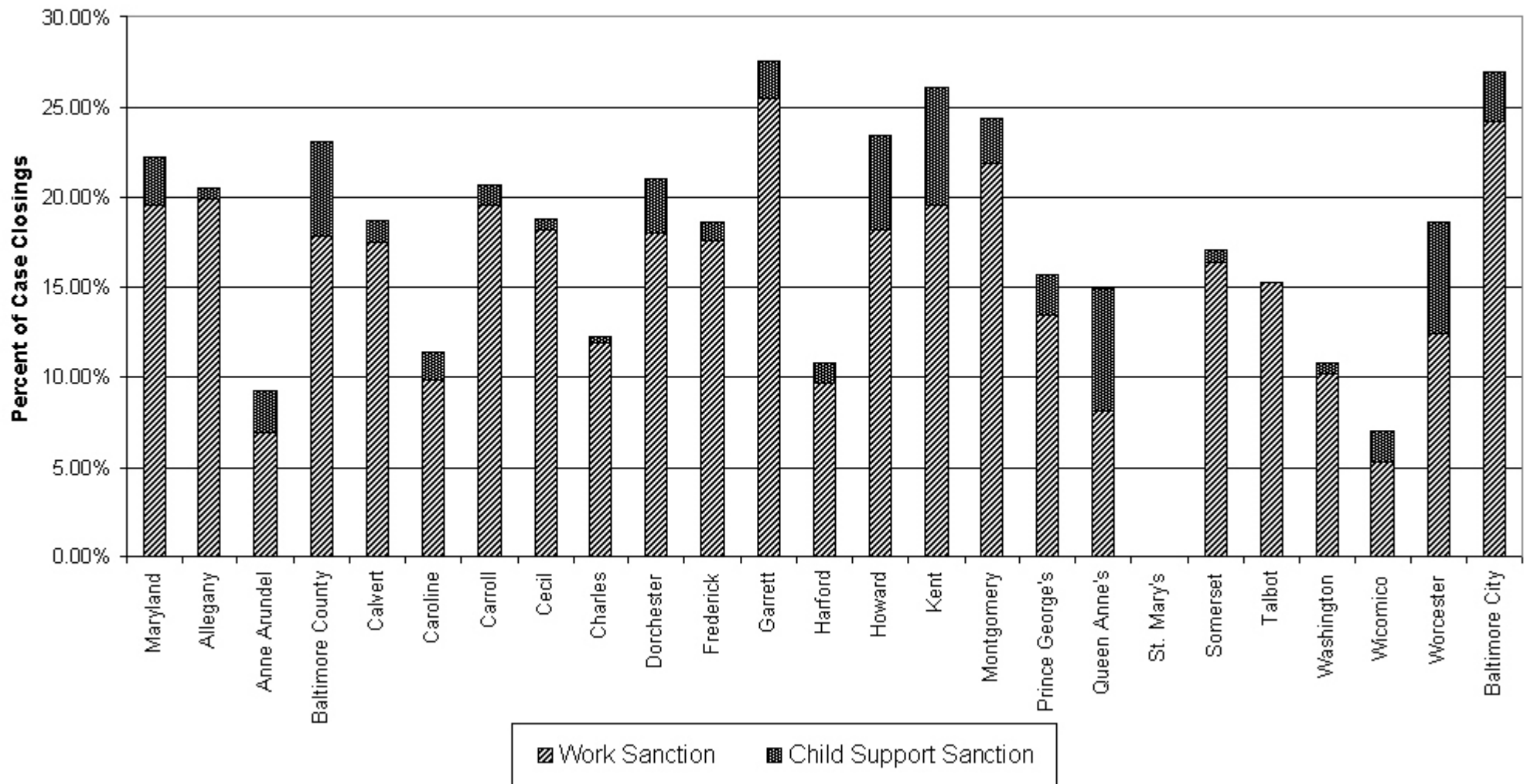
<sup>8</sup>There were no work or child support-related full family sanctions in St. Mary's County. In Queen Anne's County work sanctions were more common than child support sanctions (8.1% of all closures vs. 6.8% of all closures, respectively), but not by as wide a margin as in the other 22 jurisdictions.

cases closed due to full family sanctioning (including work and child support sanctions) ranged from lows of 7.0% and 9.2% in Wicomico and Anne Arundel counties, respectively, to highs of 27.5% in Garrett County and 26.9% in Baltimore City. The highest rates of work sanctioning were in Garrett County (25.5% of all closures), Baltimore City (24.2%) and Montgomery County (21.9%); the lowest rates were in St. Mary's (0.0%), Wicomico (5.3%) and Anne Arundel (6.9%) counties.<sup>9</sup> The highest rates of child support sanctioning were observed in Queen Anne's (6.8%), Kent (6.5%), Howard (5.2%) and Baltimore counties (5.2%), while the lowest occurred in St. Mary's (0.0%), Talbot (0.0%) and Charles (0.3%) counties.

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<sup>9</sup>Baltimore City, by far, has the largest cash assistance caseload of all 24 jurisdictions and also accounted for the largest number (n=13,722) and percentage (54.1% or 13,722/25,348) of all Year Seven case closings. In terms of closings due to full family sanctions, Baltimore City accounted for 65.5% of all sanctions, 66.8% of all work sanctions, and 55.4% of all child support sanctions during Year Seven.

**Figure 4: Sanctions**



## **Conclusions**

Over the past seven years of reform, this series has provided descriptive data regarding TCA case closures in Maryland, including specific data from each of Maryland's 24 jurisdictions. Most results related to the demographic profile of cases and payees in the seventh year are consistent with those from previous years. However, several notable trends have either persisted from the beginning of the series or emerged in recent years, and may warrant attention. In particular, these are: (1) the increase in the percentage of work sanctions; (2) progress in Baltimore City; and (3) changes in Prince George's County.

Work sanctions have been a topic of interest and concern throughout this series. The percentage of cases closed due to full family sanctions for non-compliance with work requirements has steadily risen from year to year statewide as well as in Baltimore City. Last year, 18.2% of closures statewide were due to work sanctions, as were 22.4% in Baltimore City. In Year Seven, the statewide percentage is up to 19.6% and in Baltimore City has risen to 24.2%.

In the early years of reform, the 23 counties in Maryland experienced dramatic caseload reductions and case closures while Baltimore City's changes came at a much slower pace. As a result, Baltimore City came to represent an ever-larger share of the state's overall caseload. In the first five years, Baltimore City's share of the total active caseload increased from year to year. However, for the past two years, the City's share of the total caseload has decreased, although it still accounts for more cases than the 23 counties combined. In the seventh year of reform, Baltimore City carried 55.1% of the total caseload, the lowest percentage since Year Two (October 1997 to September

1998). In addition, the gap between closures and caseload in Year Seven was -1.0 percentage points, a very small gap compared to that of -17.1 percentage points found in Year One (October 1996 to September 1997).<sup>10</sup>

On the other hand, data from Prince George's County shows that its percentage of the active caseload may be on the rise. In Year One of reform, Prince George's County carried 15.9% of the active caseload. This percentage decreased to 11.3% by the fourth year of reform (October 1999 to September 2000) but has slowly begun an upward turn; the data from last year indicated a 12.0% share, and this year's data shows 13.1%. The gap between the percentage of case closings and caseload has improved since last year's data (-1.6 percentage points versus -2.6), but the disparity still exists and warrants that we continue to monitor this trend in the future.

Overall, the picture remains generally positive. All jurisdictions are closing within two percentage points of their respective share of the active TCA caseload, two of the top reasons for closure statewide and in most jurisdictions indicate that many customers have started work, and there do not appear to be any major changes in the types of cases closed. In future reports, we will continue to monitor closures due to work sanctions, especially regarding any effects anticipated changes in work participation requirements may have.

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<sup>10</sup>It should be noted, however, that roughly one of every four (24.2%) City case closures in Year Seven resulted from a work sanction. Other of our studies have shown that work-sanctioned cases quite often return to welfare.

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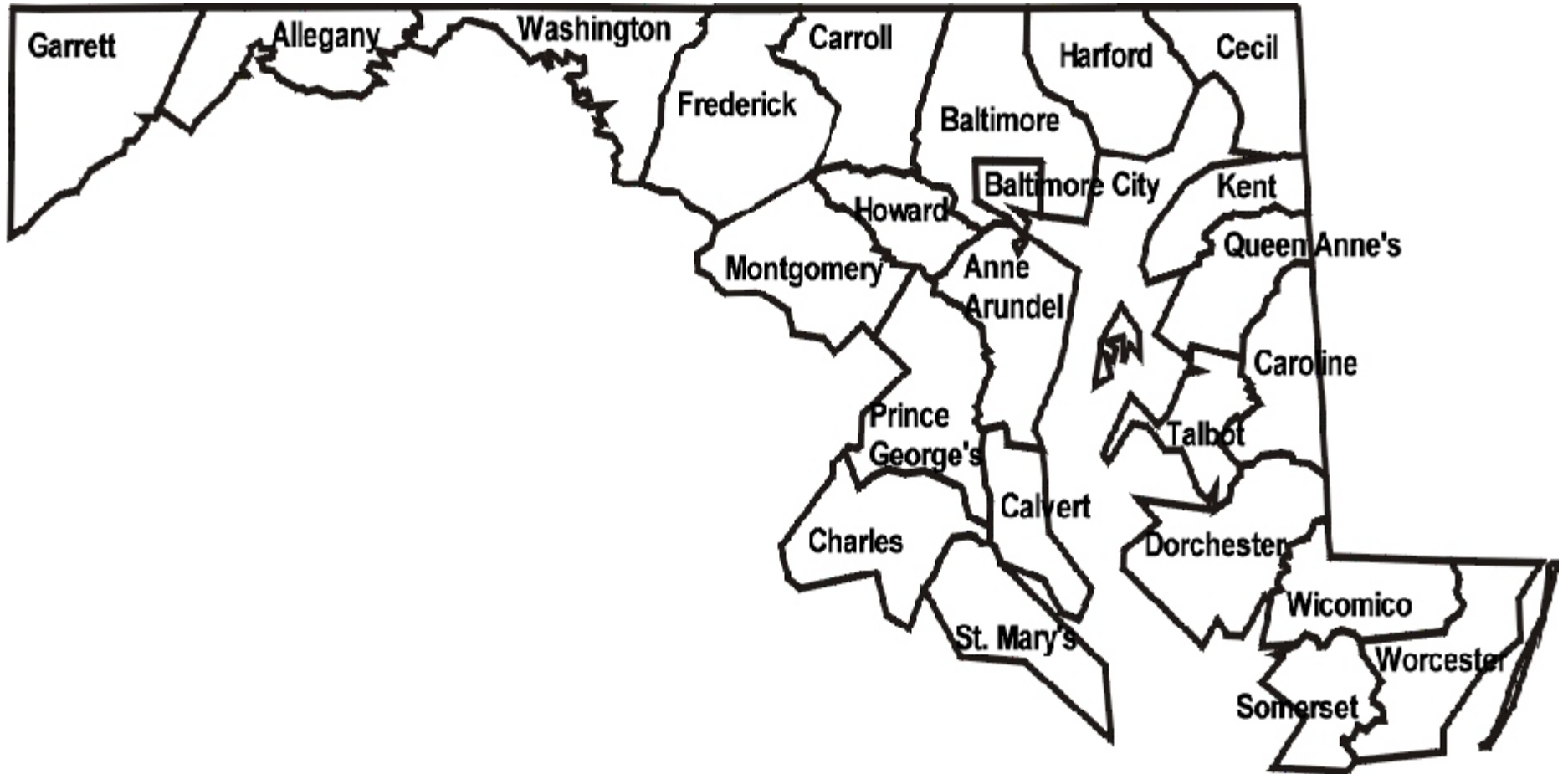
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Appendix A. Map of Maryland





### Appendix B. Top Reasons for Case Closure

<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Top 5 Closing Reasons</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Maryland</b>	no recertification/no redetermination	6,206	24.5%
	income above limit (including started work)	5,189	20.5%
	work sanction	4,974	19.6%
	eligibility/verification information -not provided	3,644	14.4%
	not eligible	1,470	5.8%
<b>Allegany</b>	worker voided application	47	26.0%
	income above limit (including started work)	43	23.8%
	work sanction	36	19.9%
	requested closure	15	8.3%
	no recertification/no redetermination	10	5.5%
<b>Anne Arundel</b>	eligibility/verification information - not provided	377	31.5%
	no recertification/no redetermination	279	23.3%
	income above limit (including started work)	201	16.8%
	work sanction	82	6.9%
	not eligible	81	6.8%
<b>Baltimore County</b>	no recertification/no redetermination	461	22.2%
	income above limit (included starting work)	454	21.8%
	work sanction	372	17.9%
	eligibility/verification information - not provided	220	10.6%
	requested closure	171	8.2%
<b>Calvert</b>	income above limit (including started work)	71	41.5%
	work sanction	30	17.5%
	eligibility/verification information - not provided	20	11.7%
	requested closure	17	9.9%
	not eligible	14	8.2%
<b>Caroline</b>	income above limit (including started work)	50	40.7%
	no recertification/no redetermination	22	17.9%
	not eligible	15	12.2%
	work sanction	12	9.8%
	requested closure	8	6.5%
<b>Carroll</b>	income above limit (including started work)	62	33.7%
	eligibility/verification information - not provided	43	23.4%
	work sanction	36	19.6%
	requested closure	15	8.2%
	whereabouts unknown	8	4.3%
<b>Cecil</b>	income above limit (including started work)	96	30.7%
	work sanction	57	18.2%
	eligibility/verification information - not provided	49	15.7%
	no recertification/no redetermination	28	8.9%
	requested closure	26	8.3%

Note: Some jurisdictions have more than 5 closing reasons listed if the fifth most common closing reason had two or more reasons for closures with an equal number of associated cases.

### Appendix B. Top Reasons for Case Closure

Jurisdiction	Top 5 Closing Reasons	Frequency	Percent
<b>Charles</b>	no recertification/no redetermination	188	49.6%
	income above limit (including started work)	74	19.5%
	work sanction	45	11.9%
	eligibility/verification information - not provided	21	5.5%
	not eligible	17	4.5%
<b>Dorchester</b>	income above limit (including started work)	70	23.0%
	work sanction	55	18.0%
	no recertification/no redetermination	55	18.0%
	requested closure	44	14.4%
	eligibility/verification information - not provided	42	13.8%
<b>Frederick</b>	income above limit (including started work)	120	31.1%
	work sanction	68	17.6%
	no recertification/no redetermination	52	13.5%
	not eligible	40	10.4%
	requested closure	40	10.4%
<b>Garrett</b>	income above limit (including started work)	35	35.7%
	work sanction	25	25.5%
	requested closure	11	11.2%
	eligibility/verification information -not provided	9	9.2%
	no recertification/no redetermination	6	6.1%
<b>Harford</b>	income above limit (including started work)	229	34.5%
	no recertification/no redetermination	127	19.2%
	eligibility/verification information - not provided	109	16.4%
	work sanction	64	9.7%
	requested closure	51	7.7%
<b>Howard</b>	income above limit (including started work)	91	31.8%
	work sanction	52	18.2%
	eligibility/verification information - not provided	44	15.4%
	no recertification/no redetermination	30	10.5%
	not eligible	19	6.6%
<b>Kent</b>	income above limit (including started work)	16	34.8%
	work sanction	9	19.6%
	not eligible	8	17.4%
	eligibility/verification information - not provided	4	8.7%
	child support sanction	3	6.5%

Note: Some jurisdictions have more than 5 closing reasons listed if the fifth most common closing reason had two or more reasons for closures with an equal number of associated cases.

## Appendix B. Top Reasons for Case Closure

Jurisdiction	Top 5 Closing Reasons	Frequency	Percent
<b>Montgomery</b>	income above limit (including started work)	263	28.7%
	work sanction	200	21.9%
	no recertification/no redetermination	168	18.4%
	eligibility/verification information - not provided	112	12.2%
	requested closure	49	5.4%
<b>Prince George's</b>	no recertification/no redetermination	687	23.6%
	income above limit (including started work)	596	20.5%
	eligibility/verification information - not provided	533	18.3%
	work sanction	390	13.4%
	requested closure	188	6.5%
<b>Queen Anne's</b>	income above limit (including started work)	28	37.8%
	not eligible	10	13.5%
	requested closure	10	13.5%
	eligibility/verification information - not provided	9	12.2%
	work sanction	6	8.1%
<b>St. Mary's</b>	no recertification/no redetermination	58	31.7%
	income above limit (including started work)	58	31.7%
	not eligible	25	13.7%
	residency	14	7.7%
	requested closure	11	6.0%
<b>Somerset</b>	income above limit (including started work)	36	25.5%
	no recertification/no redetermination	30	21.3%
	work sanction	23	16.3%
	requested closure	22	15.6%
	not eligible	11	7.8%
<b>Talbot</b>	income above limit (including starting work)	32	32.3%
	eligibility/verification information -not provided	20	20.2%
	work sanction	15	15.2%
	requested closure	14	14.1%
	no recertification/no redetermination	8	8.1%
<b>Washington</b>	income above limit (including started work)	85	26.2%
	no recertification/no redetermination	62	19.1%
	requested closure	56	17.3%
	not eligible	36	11.1%
	work sanction	33	10.2%

Note: Some jurisdictions have more than 5 closing reasons listed if the fifth most common closing reason had two or more reasons for closures with an equal number of associated cases.

### Appendix B. Top Reasons for Case Closure

Jurisdiction	Top 5 Closing Reasons	Frequency	Percent
<b>Wicomico</b>	no recertification/no redetermination	142	29.9%
	income above limit (including started work)	118	24.8%
	not eligible	49	10.3%
	requested closure	38	8.0%
	eligibility/verification information -not provided	35	7.4%
<b>Worcester</b>	income above limit (including started work)	32	33.0%
	eligibility/verification information - not provided	20	20.6%
	work sanction	12	12.4%
	requested closure	12	12.4%
	residency	8	8.2%
<b>Baltimore City</b>	no recertification/no redetermination	3,774	27.5%
	work sanction	3,327	24.2%
	income above limit (included starting work)	2,329	17.0%
	eligibility/verification information - not provided	1,887	13.7%
	not eligible	720	5.2%

Note: Some jurisdictions have more than 5 closing reasons listed if the fifth most common closing reason had two or more reasons for closures with an equal number of associated cases.

### Appendix C. Full Family Sanctions: 10/02 - 9/03

	Full Family Sanctions	Frequency	Percent
<b>Maryland</b>	Work Child Support	4,973 666	19.6% 2.6%
<b>Allegany</b>	Work Child Support	36 1	19.9% 0.6%
<b>Anne Arundel</b>	Work Child Support	82 28	6.9% 2.3%
<b>Baltimore County</b>	Work Child Support	372 109	17.9% 5.2%
<b>Calvert</b>	Work Child Support	30 2	17.5% 1.2%
<b>Caroline</b>	Work Child Support	12 2	9.8% 1.6%
<b>Carroll</b>	Work Child Support	36 2	19.6% 1.1%
<b>Cecil</b>	Work Child Support	57 2	18.2% 0.6%
<b>Charles</b>	Work Child Support	45 1	11.9% 0.3%
<b>Dorchester</b>	Work Child Support	55 9	18.0% 3.0%
<b>Frederick</b>	Work Child Support	68 4	17.6% 1.0%
<b>Garrett</b>	Work Child Support	25 2	25.5% 2.0%
<b>Harford</b>	Work Child Support	64 7	9.7% 1.1%
<b>Howard</b>	Work Child Support	52 15	18.2% 5.2%
<b>Kent</b>	Work Child Support	9 3	19.6% 6.5%
<b>Montgomery</b>	Work Child Support	200 23	21.9% 2.5%
<b>Prince George's</b>	Work Child Support	390 65	13.4% 2.2%

### Appendix C. Full Family Sanctions: 10/02 - 9/03

	Full Family Sanctions	Frequency	Percent
<b>Queen Anne's</b>	Work	6	8.1%
	Child Support	5	6.8%
<b>St. Mary's</b>	Work	0	0.0%
	Child Support	0	0.0%
<b>Somerset</b>	Work	23	16.3%
	Child Support	1	0.7%
<b>Talbot</b>	Work	15	15.2%
	Child Support	0	0.0%
<b>Washington</b>	Work	33	10.2%
	Child Support	2	0.6%
<b>Wicomico</b>	Work	25	5.3%
	Child Support	8	1.7%
<b>Worcester</b>	Work	12	12.4%
	Child Support	6	6.2%
<b>Baltimore City</b>	Work	3,326	24.2%
	Child Support	369	2.7%