

ALLEGANY COUNTY TEMPORARY CASH ASSISTANCE ACTIVE CASELOAD: 2011

SUMMARY

Caseload Characteristics

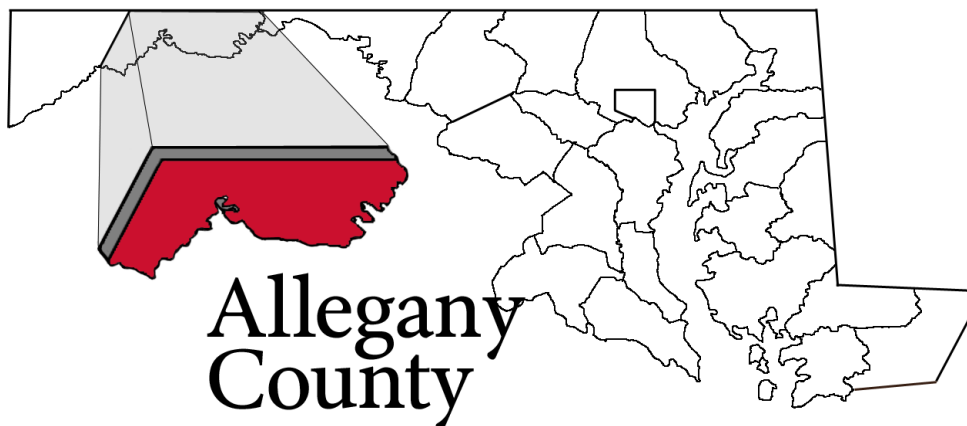
- Allegany County's TCA caseload grew from 259 cases in 2007 to 316 in 2011, an increase of 22%.
- A typical TCA recipient in Allegany County was a Caucasian (88.2%) woman (91.5%) who was about 35 years of age and had received at least her high school diploma (65.6%).
- More than half (52.9%) of TCA cases in Allegany County had two or fewer people in the assistance unit. The youngest child in the assistance unit was approximately six years old.
- The majority of cases in Allegany County (73.4%) were work-exempt cases, largely made of child-only cases (38.0%) and long-term disabled cases (21.5%).
- Allegany County experienced an increase in work-exempt cases, from 68% in 2007 to 73% in 2011. Additionally, the percent of child-only cases rose from 29% in 2007 to 38% in 2011.

TCA Participation

- Allegany County residents received TCA for two years or less in the previous five years. In 2007, families received an average of 22 months in the previous five years; this increased to 24 months in 2011.
- Between 2007 and 2010, TCA recipients had 9 to 12 months of assistance counted toward the federal time limit. However, the number of months counted toward the time limit sharply rose to 18 months in 2011.

Employment and Wages

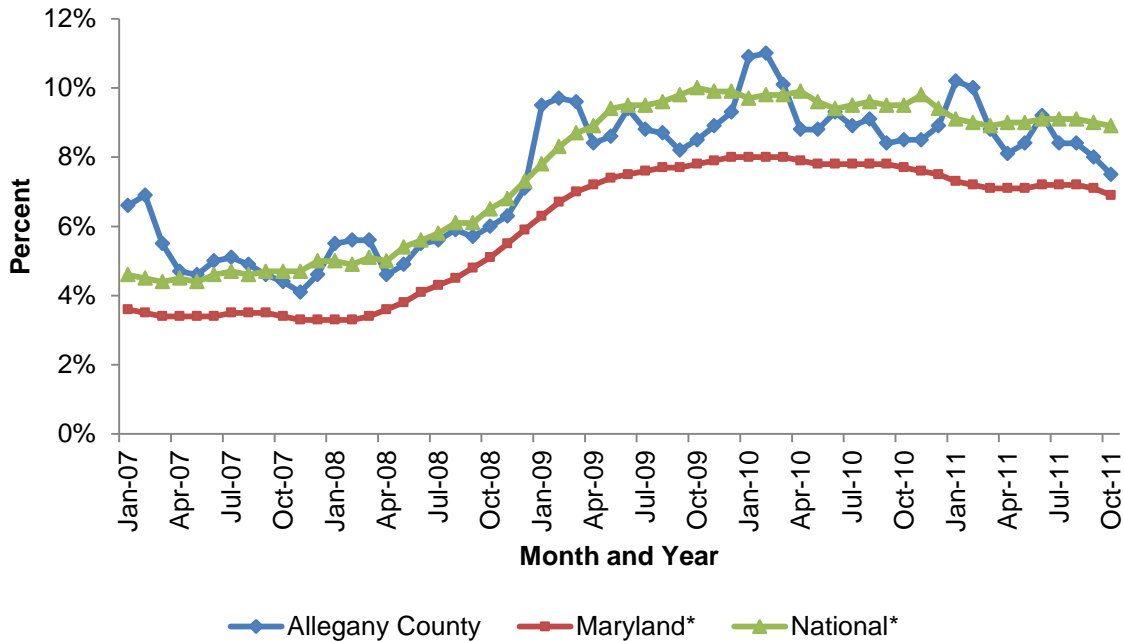
- Allegany County's recipients were less likely to have worked in the previous two years than their counterparts in the rest of Maryland. The percent of Allegany caseheads working in the previous two years decreased from 46% in 2007 to 37% in 2010, only to rise to 41% in 2011.
- The median total earnings in the previous two years also decreased between 2007 and 2011. In 2007, median total earnings were \$6,828 and decreased to \$4,433 by 2011.



INTRODUCTION

This report is a supplemental resource to *Life on Welfare: Characteristics of Maryland's TCA Caseload since the Great Recession*.ⁱ While the main report focuses on the statewide trends of the active caseload, this report provides trends specifically for Allegany County by utilizing the same methodology and data. Allegany County borders Pennsylvania and West Virginia in Western Maryland. The population remained consistent over the past decade and represents about one percent of Maryland's residents. Allegany County saw a decrease of 3.5 percentage points in the unemployment rate between February 2010 (11.0%) and October 2011 (7.5%).ⁱⁱ However, as Figure 1 shows, the unemployment rate in Allegany County has been above the state average since 2007.

Figure 1. Unemployment Rate, 2007-2011



* Indicates seasonal adjustment.

The largest industries within Allegany County are health services; education; and trade, transportation, and utility; yet the top five employers only employed one in six individuals in the labor market.ⁱⁱⁱ Considering its location, it is not surprising that, in 2010, 15.7% of residents commuted for employment outside Allegany County, and 9.1% of residents traveled to another state for employment.^{iv} The majority of Allegany residents age 25 and older received a high school degree or higher (85.1%); the number shrinks considerably among those who hold Bachelor degrees or higher (15.9%).^v One third (31.8%) of Allegany households earned under \$25,000 with average household income of \$51,700 in 2010 and a median household income of \$37,747.^{vi} The estimated poverty rate for 2011 was 18.9%^{vii} in Allegany County, which was 11 percentage points higher than the state average.^{viii}

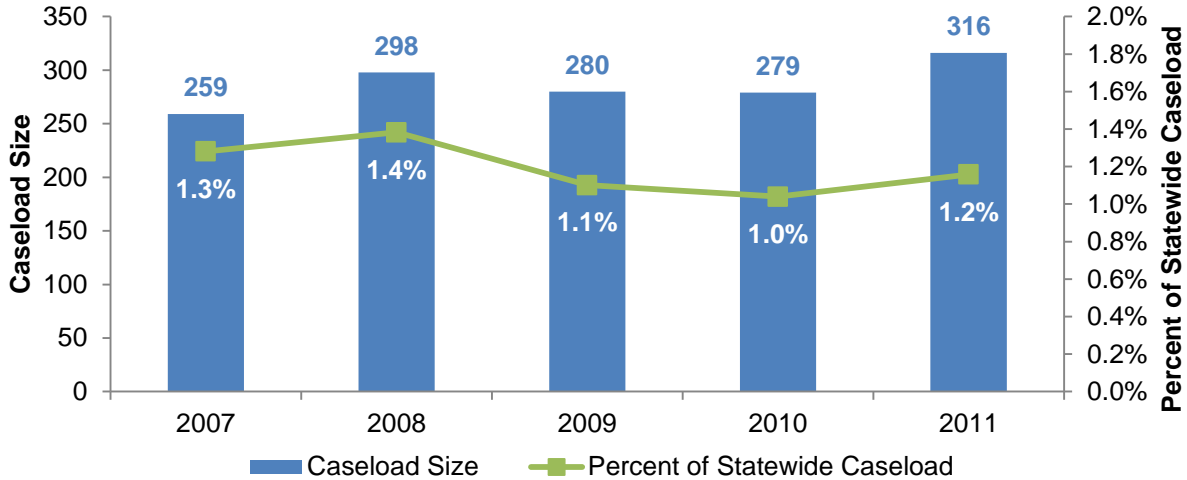
	Allegany	Maryland
2010 Population	75,087	5,773,552
2011 Poverty Rate	18.9%	8.6%
2010 Median Household Income	\$37,747	\$90,500

FINDINGS

Caseload Characteristics

TCA caseloads across all of Maryland increased since the start of the Great Recession, and Allegany County was no different. The total caseload size in Allegany County, as shown in Figure 2, increased from 259 cases in October 2007 to 316 cases in October 2011, a 22% increase. Even with this increase, Allegany County’s caseload only represented approximately one percent of Maryland’s statewide caseload.

Figure 2. TCA Caseload for Allegany County, 2007-2011



Note: The active caseload for this and all other analyses are from October of each year between 2007 and 2011.

The general profile of Allegany County TCA recipients, as displayed in Table 2, was a Caucasian (88.2%) woman (91.5%) who has completed high school but received no additional education (54.6%). Allegany County TCA recipients were 35 years old, on average, and nearly half (48.7%) never married. This profile has not changed between 2007 and 2011, but there were some differences compared to the statewide profile. The typical Maryland TCA casehead was an African-American (75.0%) woman (94.4%) who never married (78.8%) and was in her mid-30s (mean=35.14 years). She was likely to have finished high school (61.8%) but not to have obtained further education (4.6%).

Table 2. Allegany County Payee Demographic Characteristics: 2011 (n=316)

Gender	
% Women	91.5% (289)
Race	
% African American^	10.8% (33)
% Caucasian^	88.2% (270)
Education	
Finished 12th grade	54.6% (159)
Beyond 12th grade	11.0% (32)
Marital Status	
Never married	48.7% (152)
Age at Study Month	
Mean [median]	34.84 [32.17]
Range	19.04-75.79

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

As shown in Table 3, most assistance units were relatively small: over half (59.2%) of all cases contained just one or two recipients, and less than one in five (18.0%) consisted of four or more people. On average, assistance units had one adult or less and one or two children. The average age of the youngest child in the assistance unit was six years. This was consistent with the average case in Maryland, where 57.8% of cases contained just one or two recipients and 19.7% had four or more people. The average age of the youngest child in a Maryland assistance unit was also six.

Table 3. Allegany County Case Demographic Characteristics: 2011 (n=316)

Size of Assistance Unit (AU)	
1-2 people	59.2% (187)
3 people	22.8% (72)
4 or more people	18.0% (57)
Mean [median]	2.45 [2]
Number of Adults in AU	
Mean [median]	0.72 [1]
Number of Children in the AU	
Mean [median]	1.73 [1.5]
Age of Youngest Recipient	
Mean [median]	5.97 [4.61]
Range	.01 – 17.93

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

According to Table 4, one quarter (26.6%) of Allegany’s caseload was designated as work-eligible in 2011, which was substantially lower than the state level (44.9%). The caseheads of work-eligible cases are required to participate in a work-related activity. Over one-third (38.0%) of cases were child-only compared to 29.0% among all cases in Maryland. Allegany County also had a larger long-term disabled population (21.5%) than Maryland cases (11.8%).

The county experienced a 22% increase in its overall caseload between 2007 and 2011, yet the percent of single-parent cases decreased (from 21.2% to 12.7%). The percent of work-exempt cases increased (from 68.0% to 73.4%), suggesting that Allegany County had fewer work-eligible cases throughout this period. The greatest increase occurred among child-only cases, from 29.3% to 38.0% of the total caseload. The actual number of child-only cases increased from 76 to 120 cases, an increase of 57.9%.

Table 4. Allegany County Caseload Designations, 2007-2011***

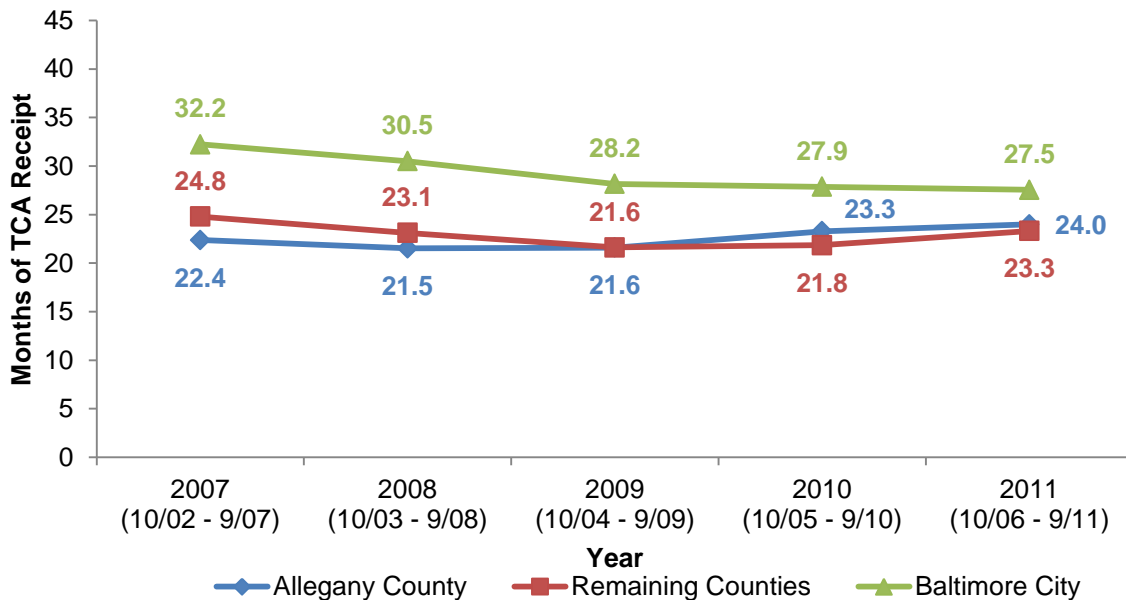
	2007 (n=259)	2008 (n=297)	2009 (n=280)	2010 (n=279)	2011 (n=316)
Work-Eligible	32.0% (83)	22.9% (68)	17.9% (50)	16.5% (46)	26.6% (84)
Single-Parent Cases	21.2% (55)	11.8% (35)	10.4% (29)	10.4% (29)	12.7% (40)
Short-term Disability	7.7% (20)	6.4% (19)	-	3.9% (11)	4.7% (15)
Two-Parent Cases	-	-	-	-	4.7% (15)
Work-Exempt	68.0% (176)	77.1% (229)	82.1% (230)	83.5% (233)	73.4% (232)
Child-Only	29.3% (76)	38.4% (114)	36.8% (103)	40.9% (114)	38.0% (120)
Child Under One	13.9% (36)	12.1% (36)	16.4% (46)	16.1% (45)	9.8% (31)
Long-term Disability	21.2% (55)	22.9% (68)	23.2% (65)	22.6% (63)	21.5% (68)
Needy Caretaker Relative	-	3.4% (10)	4.3% (12)	-	-

Note: Counts may not sum to actual sample size because caseload designations were excluded to protect recipient confidentiality when the sample was under 10 cases. The following designations were excluded in all years: legal immigrant, domestic violence, caring for a disabled household member, and earnings cases. Valid percentages are reported. *p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001.

TCA Participation

The remaining analyses on TCA receipt and employment compare Allegany County to Baltimore City and the remaining 22 counties. We use the remaining 22 counties rather than statewide figures since those figures tend to mirror Baltimore City, due to its disproportionately large share of the state's caseload. The trends in the average number of months of TCA receipt in the last five years are presented in Figure 3. In all years, Allegany TCA recipients received assistance for an average of two years or less over the previous five years. For example, the 2007 caseload received an average of 22.4 months of TCA in the previous five years (between October 2002 and September 2007). This average remained stable over the next couple of years, but increased by two months to 24.0 months, on average, by 2011. This trend of incremental changes up and down was similar in the remaining counties, and average TCA receipt also remained around two of the previous five years. Baltimore City, however, saw a continuous decline in the average number of months of TCA receipt throughout this time period.

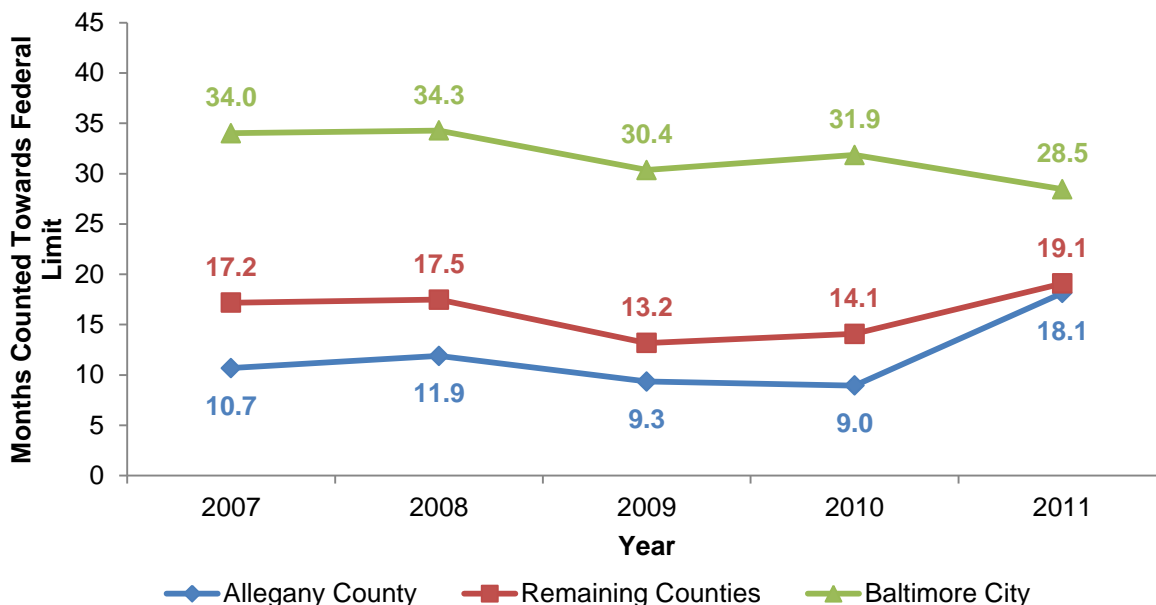
Figure 3. Average Number of Months of TCA in the Previous Five Years: 2007-2011***



*p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001

Most adult TCA recipients are subject to a 60-month lifetime limit on benefit receipt. However, Maryland does allow for hardship exemptions for cases that require additional months of receipt. Statewide, only seven percent of the entire caseload has received more than 60 months of TCA.^{ix} Figure 4 shows the trend in the average number of months counted toward the federal 60-month time limit between 2007 and 2011 for Allegany County, the remaining 22 counties, and Baltimore City. Cases in Allegany County had between 9 and 12 months counted toward their 60-month limits, on average, between 2007 and 2010; however, in 2011, this figure increased dramatically to 18.1 months on average.^x The number of months counting towards the federal time limit was lower than the number of months received in the previous five years. This is due to the large proportion of work-exempt cases that may have received months of TCA that did not count towards the federal time limit due to various exemptions. Similar to Allegany County, the remaining Maryland counties had an initial decrease in the average number of months, but began to rise again after 2009. Baltimore City, on the other hand, continued to see a decrease in months counted toward the federal time limit, from 34.0 months in 2007 to 28.5 months in 2011.

Figure 4. Average Number of Months Counted Towards Federal Limit***



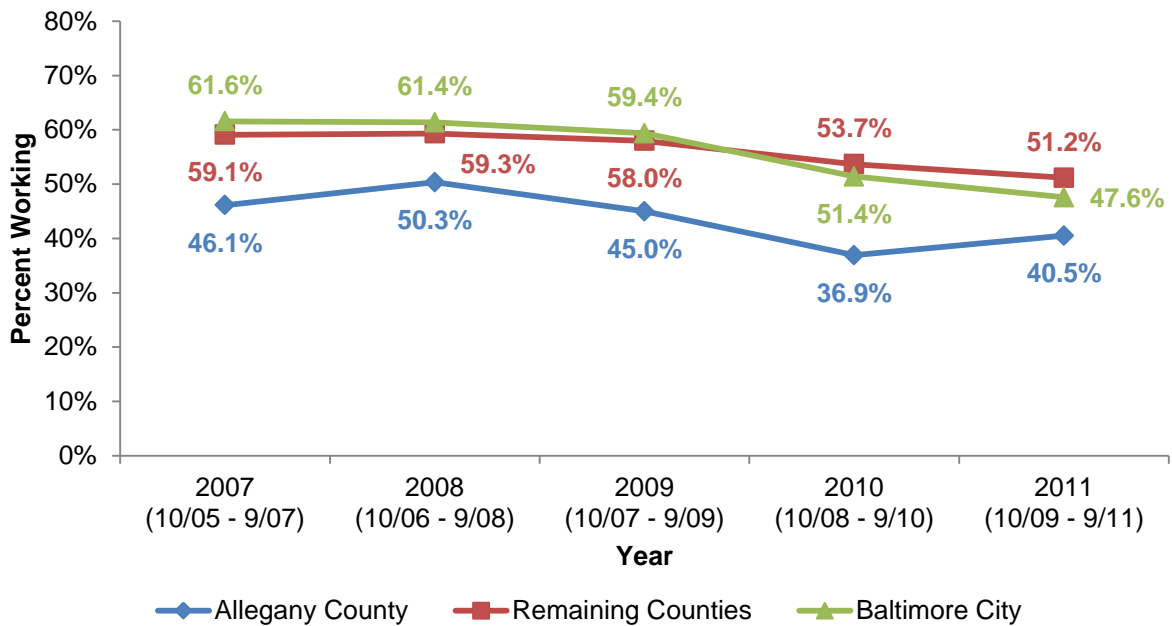
*p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001

Employment and Wages

To encourage self-sufficiency, casehead employment is the ultimate goal of welfare, and research has confirmed that cash assistance recipients are no strangers to the world of work.^{xi} To provide a perspective on employment in Allegany County, Figure 5 compares Allegany County, the remaining counties, and Baltimore City on the percent of caseheads who worked in a Maryland UI-covered job in the two years before each study year from 2007 to 2011. There was a decline in employment participation from 50.3% to 36.9% between 2008 and 2010. There was a slight increase in employment participation in 2011 to 40.5%. This finding was not surprising considering the fact that Allegany County has had an unemployment rate above the state average throughout this entire time period. Both Baltimore City and the remaining counties began with an employment participation rate around 60.0%, more than 10 percentage points higher than Allegany County. However, nearly one in ten Allegany residents have employment outside Maryland, which may also result in some of the lower employment rates among TCA recipients.^{xii}

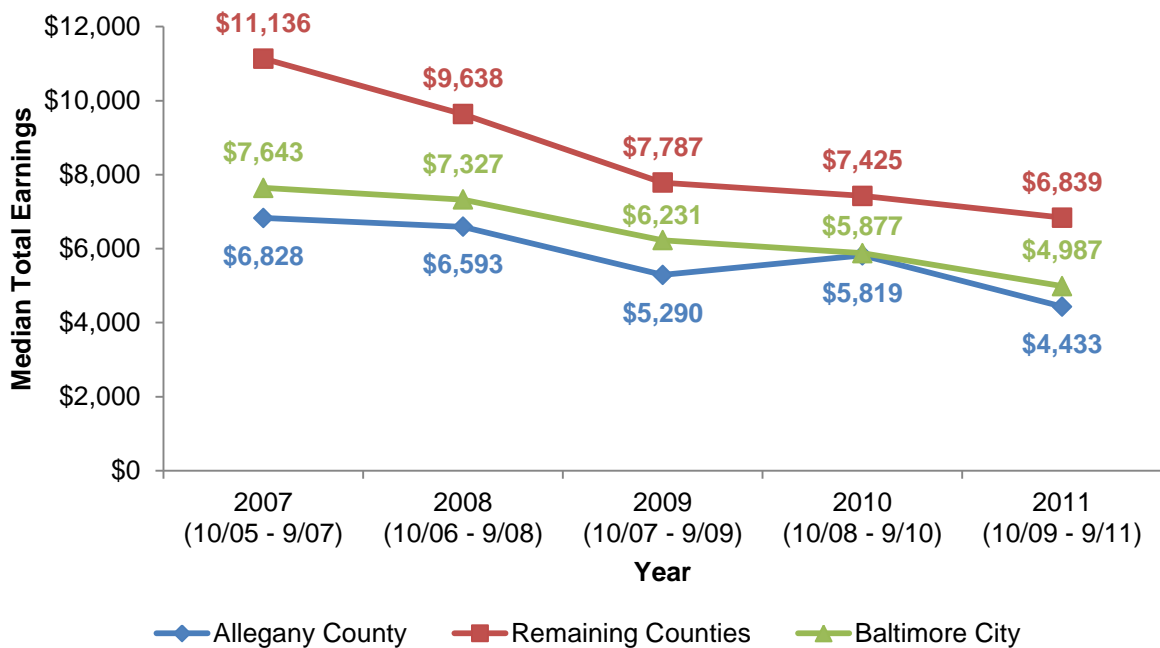
Figure 6 shows the median total earnings in the previous two years for each of the five study years for Allegany County, the remaining counties, and Baltimore City. There was a substantial decline of more than \$2,000 in median total earnings in Allegany County from \$6,828 in 2007 to \$4,433 in 2011. While both Baltimore City and the remaining counties also saw a decline in median total earnings, the caseheads in Allegany County were consistently earning less over time. Baltimore City caseheads saw a decrease of more than \$2,500 between 2007 and 2011, while the remaining counties saw a decrease of more than \$4,000 over the same time period.

Figure 5. Percent of Caseheads Working in the Previous Two Years, 2007-2011***



*p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001

Figure 6. Median Total Earnings in Previous Two Years, 2007-2011***



Note: All earning amounts are reported in 2011 dollars. *p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001

CONCLUSIONS

In 2011, Allegany County's TCA caseload was comprised of Caucasian women about 35 years old with high school diplomas. Allegany County's caseload designations have changed, however, between 2007 and 2011. The percent of cases designated as work-eligible dropped by five percentage points while child-only cases increased by nearly 10 percentage points. With these changes in the work-eligible caseload and the devastating effects of the Great Recession, TCA receipt increased slightly, and employment participation decreased. The decreasing number of work-eligible cases placed increased pressure on a few caseheads to find and maintain employment when jobs are limited, especially in Allegany County, where unemployment was as high as 11% in some months. Furthermore, for those who were working, earnings decreased, resulting in continued need for TCA receipt, and potentially, still more families that may need assistance.

Notes and Sources:

ⁱ Nicoli, L.T., Logan, L., & Born, C.E. (2012). *Life after Welfare: Annual Update*. Baltimore: University of Maryland School of Social Work. Available online: <http://www.familywelfare.umaryland.edu/reports1/life17.pdf>

ⁱⁱ United States Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2011, November 22). Regional and state employment and unemployment (monthly) news release. Retrieved from http://www.bls.gov/news.release/archives/laus_11222011.htm.

ⁱⁱⁱ United States Census Bureau. (2012a). American Community Survey. Available from <http://factfinder2.census.gov/>.

^{iv} United States Census Bureau. (2012a). American Community Survey. Available from <http://factfinder2.census.gov/>.

^v United States Census Bureau. (2012a). American Community Survey. Available from <http://factfinder2.census.gov/>.

^{vi} United States Census Bureau. (2012a). American Community Survey. Available from <http://factfinder2.census.gov/>.

^{vii} The 2011 estimate was available for Allegany County as presented above. However, for purposes of comparison with other jurisdictions, the 3 year 2009-2011 estimate was 16.8%.

^{viii} United States Census Bureau. (2012b). Poverty thresholds. Available from <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/data/threshld/index.html>.

^{ix} Logan, L., Saunders, C., & Born, C.E. (2012). *Welfare Time Limits: Hardship Exemptions in Maryland*. Baltimore: University of Maryland School of Social Work.

^x Due to the small caseload sizes in Allegany County, a few outlier cases can skew the means. While the mean number of months had increased drastically, the median number of months towards the federal time limit was only 9 months, consistent with previous years' findings.

^{xi} Nicoli, L.T., Logan, L., & Born, C.E. (2012). *Life after Welfare: Annual Update*. Baltimore: University of Maryland School of Social Work.

^{xii} United States Census Bureau. (2012a). American Community Survey. Available from <http://factfinder2.census.gov/>.

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