

Agency Overview

2025



Our Mission

The South Carolina Department of Social Services (SCDSS) serves South Carolina by promoting the safety, permanency, and well-being of children and vulnerable adults, helping individuals achieve stability and strengthening families.

This mission is accomplished through the core principles of competence, courage and compassion.

Report Abuse and Neglect

The statewide, 24/7 hotline for reporting abuse/neglect is 1-888-CARE-4-US (1-888-227-3487). Non-emergency reports of abuse and neglect can be made [online](#). For emergencies, please contact 911 or your local law enforcement office.



Programs and Services

Child Welfare

CHILD WELFARE SERVICES INVESTIGATIONS

Child Welfare Services Investigations Unit investigates reports of suspected child abuse and neglect by parents, guardians, and caregivers. After receiving a report, the DSS Intake Unit decides whether the report meets the state law's definition of child abuse and/or neglect. Accepted reports are investigated and needed services are offered to children and families with a goal of lowering risk and increasing the family's ability to protect children. In some cases, a safety plan can be developed with a protector or kinship caregiver to ensure the child's safety and well-being while DSS works with the family.

FOSTER CARE/ADOPTION

Children who cannot safely remain in the home while DSS provides services to the family are placed in the legal custody of DSS. Children may be placed in a licensed kinship foster home, a non-kin foster home or group-care facility that can best meet their needs while their parents work with DSS toward reunification. When children in foster care cannot be reunited with their biological families, permanency is sought through a subsidized kinship guardianship arrangement or through termination of parental rights and adoption. Youth remaining in foster care receive assistance to make a successful transition into adulthood.

Economic Services

TANF (TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES)

TANF is South Carolina's welfare program which provides temporary financial assistance to needy families with dependent children who meet federal eligibility guidelines. [Apply online for benefits.](#)

SNAP (SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM)

SNAP benefits, formerly known as the Food Stamp Program, provide eligible, low-income households with nutrition assistance by increasing the household's food purchasing power. SNAP benefits are issued monthly to the recipient's EBT (Electronic Benefits Transfer) card. [Apply online for benefits and receive real-time application and case status notifications.](#)

WORK PROGRAMS / SNAP EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Employment training and job search assistance are available to SNAP recipients, which may help some recipients satisfy the work requirement for time-limited benefits. Services are provided by DSS county office staff as well as through partnerships with other state agencies and community-based organizations.

SENIOR FARMERS' MARKET NUTRITION PROGRAM (SFMNP)

The Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) is a seasonal USDA grant program that provides participants with access to fresh, nutritious, unprocessed fruits and vegetables from local farmers' markets and is designed to increase awareness and use of community markets.

HEALTHY BUCKS PROGRAM

The "Healthy Bucks" program allows SNAP recipients to obtain additional fresh fruits and vegetables when they use their SNAP benefits to purchase fresh produce at participating Healthy Bucks Vendors.

CLAIMS

The Benefit Integrity Unit is responsible for the collection of SNAP and TANF claims of overpayment or fraud. The Unit leads the Southeast and nation in ensuring benefits are administered according to federal regulations.



Programs and Services *(cont.)*

Economic Services *(cont.)*

CHILD CARE (LICENSING, QUALITY, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT)

SCDSS is the licensing and regulatory agency for child care providers and administers the Child Care Scholarship program to help low income families afford quality child care so parents can work. The agency manages the ABC Quality rating and improvement system and the professional development system for South Carolina's child care workforce. Learn more at [SCChildCare.org](https://www.sccare.org).

CHILD CARE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

The Child Care Scholarship Program makes child care more affordable for families by making all or a portion of provider payments directly to child care providers so parents can work or attend school or training. [Apply online.](#)

Adult Advocacy/Domestic Violence Prevention

Adult Protective Services (APS) protects the health and welfare of elderly, disabled and vulnerable adults who are 18 or older and victims of actual, or potential abuse, neglect, self-neglect or exploitation. DSS contracts with local shelters and community agencies throughout the state to prevent or reduce the incidence of domestic violence.

Child Support Services

The Child Support Services Division provides administrative services to obtain child support. Services include establishing, modifying, and enforcing support obligations, locating parents and establishing paternity. There is no cost to apply for these services. [Apply for services and check case information online.](#)

Office of General Counsel (OGC)/County Legal Teams

The OGC provides advice, counsel, and legal representation to the DSS, its executive leaders and management at the state level in all program and support areas, as well as leadership and oversight of DSS Legal Operations statewide. County and Region-based trial attorneys pursue the agency's objectives in a wide range of child abuse and neglect matters and adult protective service matters in Family Court as well as appeals.

Office of Inspector General (OIG)

The OIG exists to increase accountability and oversight of the major program functions and operations of the DSS statewide system. The OIG consists of complaint intake and investigations, audits, quality improvement, compliance, and policy units as well as a law enforcement liaison. [Online contact form.](#)

Constituent Services

The Constituent Services Unit assists members of the public who have questions or concerns about DSS programs and services. For general information or help resolving an issue, call (803) 898-7601.

[Online contact form.](#)

Disaster Services

During an emergency or disaster, such as a hurricane or ice storm, the staff at South Carolina Department of Social Services provides immediate support to South Carolina citizens. Our staff works to ensure minimal disruption of services in the aftermath of a disaster and provide social services or benefits to qualifying families. DSS also offers disaster preparedness information and training throughout the year for foster parents, group homes and child care providers in South Carolina.



DSS Leadership Contacts

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CHILD WELFARE

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DSS County Contacts

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CHESTERFIELD COUNTY DSS

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Lamar Office:

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DILLON COUNTY DSS

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DORCHESTER COUNTY DSS

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EDGEFIELD COUNTY DSS

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FAIRFIELD COUNTY DSS

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DSS County Contacts *(cont.)*

FLORENCE COUNTY DSS

Orbree Friday Widder, Director

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Lake City Office:

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GEORGETOWN COUNTY DSS

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GREENVILLE COUNTY DSS

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GREENWOOD COUNTY DSS

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Adoptions Regional Offices

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PEE DEE OFFICE

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LOWCOUNTRY OFFICE

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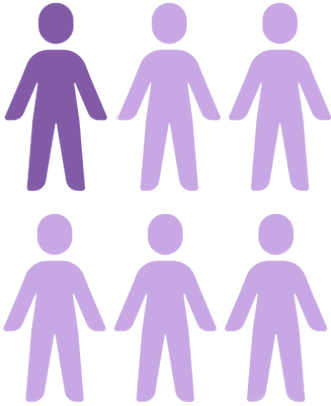
UPSTATE OFFICE

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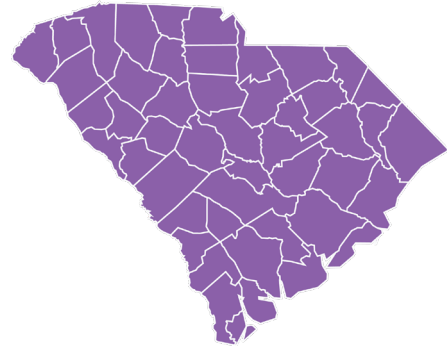


DSS Facts & Resources

DSS serves 1 in every 6 South Carolinians.



DSS employs more than 4,600 professionals across the state and operates a county office in each of the state's 46 counties.



Foster Care Data Dashboard

Daily data on the number and demographics of children in foster care in South Carolina by county. [View online.](#)

Adult Protective Services Dashboard

Current number of open services provided by DSS to protect vulnerable adults from harm caused by themselves or another person. [View online.](#)

Child Support Dashboard

Provides a visual map of total collections, caseloads, and key demographic stats (age, gender and race) for custodial/non-custodial parents as well as child support collections distributed to families via active cases. [View online.](#)

Finalized Adoption Dashboard

Provides a visual map of Foster Care children whose finalized adoption was achieved, by calendar year. [View online.](#)

Reunification Dashboard

Provides a visual map of foster care children who were returned to the custody of a parent/guardian, by calendar year. [View online.](#)

Connect With Us!



dss.sc.gov



DSS Connect: 1-800-616-1309



Text "DSS" to 211-211



South Carolina
Department of Social Services



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