



LCDJFS E-Newsletter

Fall 2008

A newsletter from the Lorain County Department of Job & Family Services

This Issue

| | |
|---|----------|
| Lorain County Food Stamp Performance – FFY 2007 | 1 |
| Food Stamps | 1 |
| Medicaid BuyIn for Workers with Disabilities (MBIWD) | 2 |
| Medicaid | 2 |
| Medicaid (continued) | 3 |
| Gift Card Giveaway | 4 |

Lorain County Food Stamp Performance – FFY 2007

By Marian Slovak

We're pleased to report that Lorain County finished FFY 2007 with a high degree of payment accuracy in the Food Stamp program. Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) Quality Control staff audit a selection of Food Stamp cases each month to insure county compliance with complex state and federal regulations. Ohio faces federal financial sanctions if payment accuracy exceeds the federal standard for two consecutive years.

Statewide 3,924 cases authorized between 10/1/06 – 9/30/07 were audited by ODJFS staff. Seventy-five of those were for Lorain County. Our county had the second best performance of the top 10 Metro Counties and will be in line for recognition at the state conference later this year.

Director Mary Lou Golski and Assistant Director Joe DeTillio acknowledged this accomplishment at an All Staff Meeting held March 24th at our agency. Caseworkers, staff development trainers, inhouse quality reviewers, and program supervisors were recognized for their dedication and hard work.

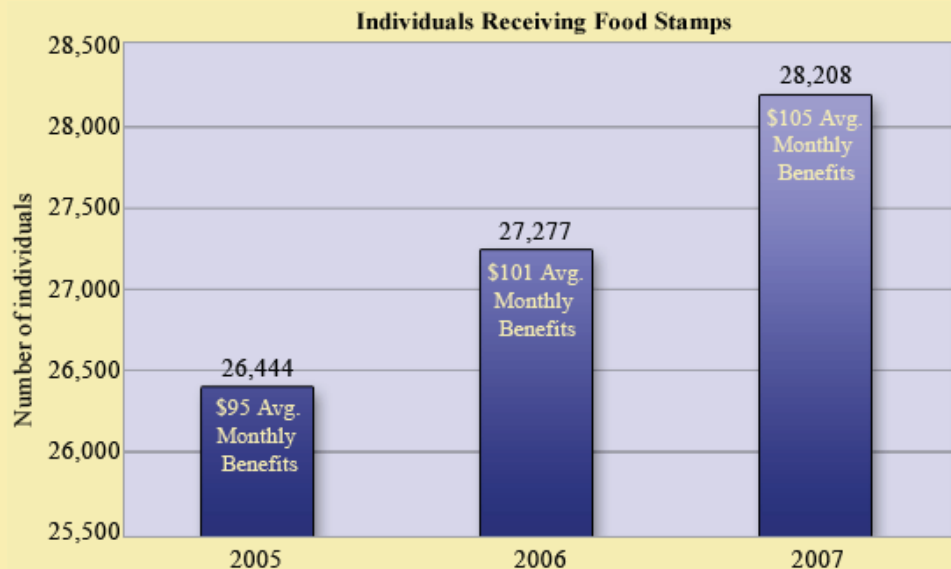
Lorain County issues Food Stamp benefits to almost 12,000 households with benefits totaling \$2,965,000 per month. Over 28,000 individuals receive an average of \$105 in monthly food stamp benefits. ODJFS and the counties must work together to bring Ohio's payment accuracy rate into compliance or face significant risk of federal sanctions. We're proud to have done our part this past year.

Food Stamps

By Marian Slovak

Food Stamps is a federally funded program designed to subsidize family and individual income to purchase food necessary for maintaining good health. Lorain County delivered these benefits with an exceptional degree of accuracy, continuously meeting or exceeding strict Federal and State performance standards.

As of December 2007, there was a 3% increase in the number of individuals being assisted with 28,208 individuals receiving Food Stamps. The average issuance per person was \$105/month.



Medicaid Update Medicaid BuyIn for Workers with Disabilities

By Marian Slovak

The new Medicaid program allowing eligible workers with disabilities to continue receiving Medicaid benefits received federal approval on 3/14/08 and became effective April 1, 2008. With the creation of the Medicaid BuyIn for Workers with Disabilities, eligible individuals may earn up to 250% (\$26,000 in 2008) of the Federal Poverty Level (after a \$20,000 earned income disregard) and may pay a monthly premium to get or continue Medicaid health care coverage. MBIWD was created last year by Governor Ted Strickland and the Ohio General Assembly as part of the Ohio biennial budget legislation.

Under the program, Ohioans between the ages of 16 and 64 with a disability defined by the Social Security Administration, but who are working receiving paid, taxed earnings, can pay an income-based premium for Medicaid coverage. Eligible individuals would not have a Spenddown amount to pay, but would instead pay a premium based on family income and size. Additional information on the program is available by calling the Ohio Medicaid Consumer Hotline at 1-800-324-8680.

Agency staff have received training. Applications are available. Interested individuals should contact our office and request the MBIWD addendum form, the JFS 07211 along with the JFS 07200 "Request for Cash, Food Stamp, and Medical Assistance" application.



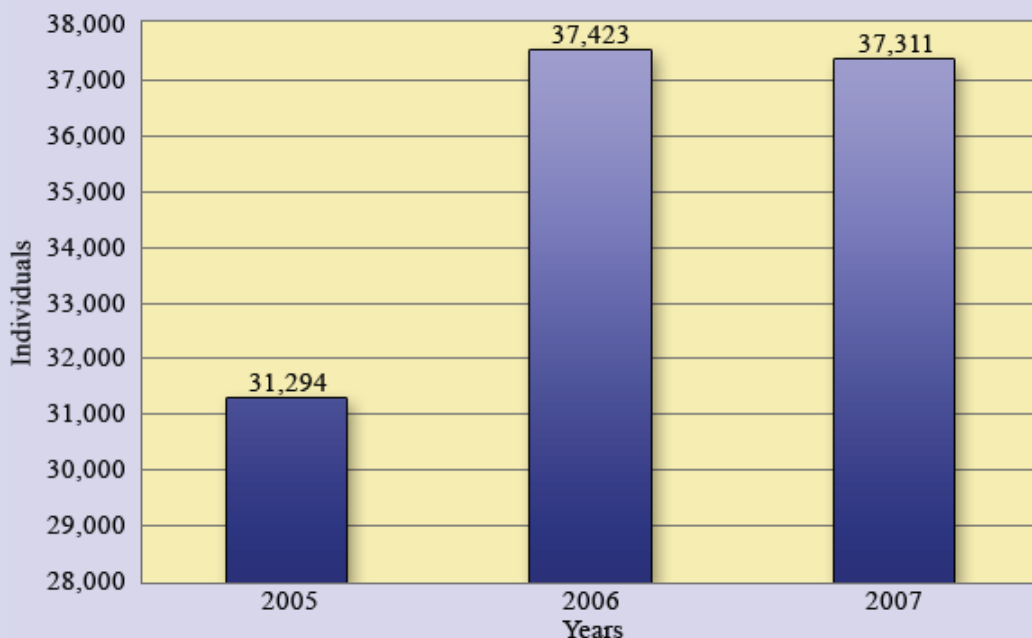
Medicaid

By Marian Slovak

Medicaid is a Federal and State funded program for health care coverage for children, families, and the aged, blind and disabled. The scope of coverage includes prescription drugs, medical services including inpatient and outpatient care, and special equipment. The State contracts with several Managed Care Plans to deliver services in an effort to reduce costs and save taxpayer dollars, yet still provide quality health care services to eligible citizens. Medicaid works in conjunction with Medicare and private health insurance plans.

Families receive benefits under several categories of Covered Families and Children Medicaid. There was basically no change in the number of individuals receiving help under these programs since last year.

Covered Families & Children Medicaid



Medicaid (Continued)

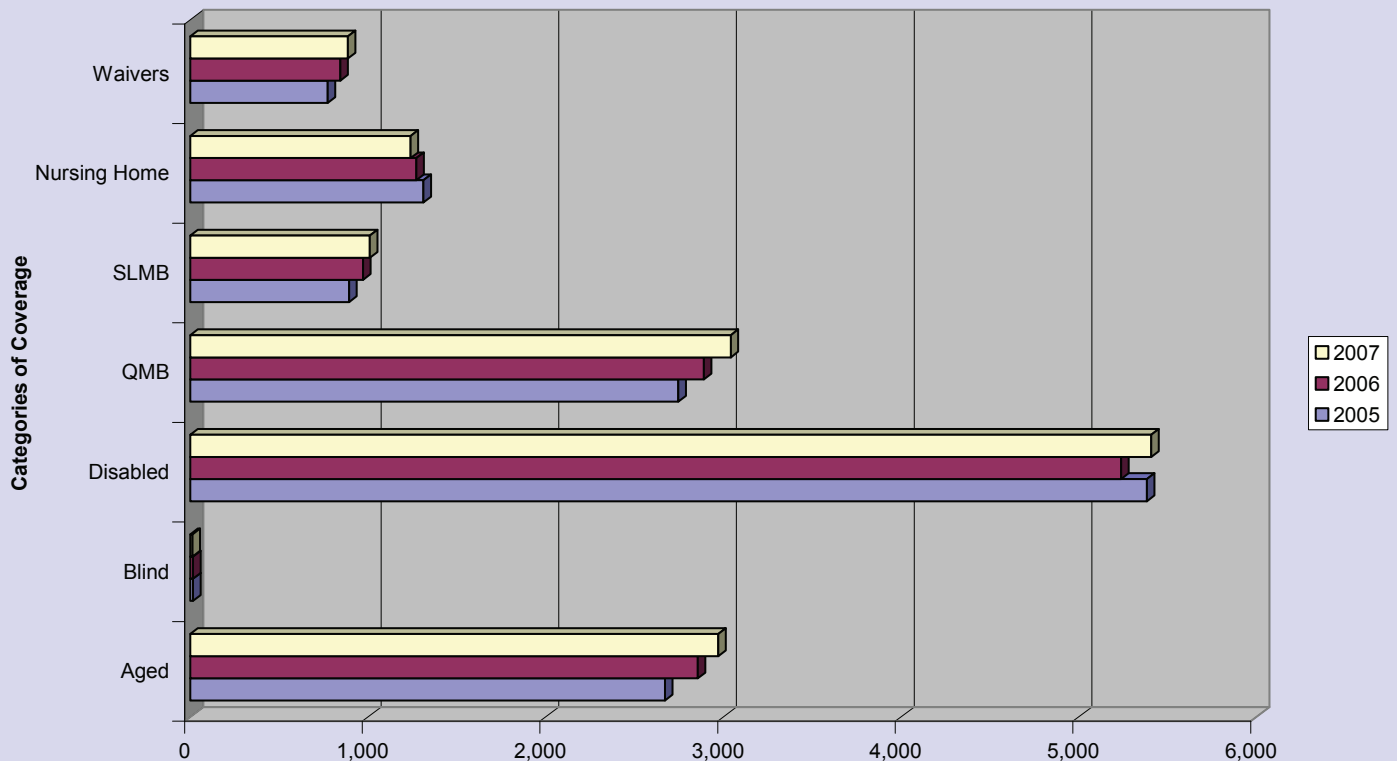
Low-income individuals residing in the community and in approved nursing homes who meet stringent eligibility criteria also receive assistance through Aged, Blind or Disabled (ABD) Medicaid programs. Those receiving Medicare through the Federal government may receive assistance with Medicare costs through QMB and SLMB Medicare cost-sharing programs; and will qualify for Extra Help to assist with their Medicare Plan D Prescription Drug Program costs. There was a 4% increase in county residents receiving help under these programs last year.

The following groups received ABD Medicaid or Medicare cost-sharing help as of December 2007:

| | | | |
|----------|-------|------|-------|
| Aged | 2,972 | QMB | 3,042 |
| Blind | 13 | SLMB | 1,011 |
| Disabled | 5,409 | RSS | 12 |

Of the above, an average 1,240 individuals resided in approved nursing homes or intermediate care facilities. An additional 887 received help through Waivers.

Medicaid Covered Groups



GIFT CARD GIVEAWAY

By **Administrator Natalio Rodriquez**

March 2008 saw LCDJFS doing another of their popular gift card giveaways. This time it was for School Shoes. The program targeted children ages 5 through 17 attending school. Each eligible child was given a \$100 gift card to shop at Payless Shoe Stores in Lorain County. Our clients were able to shop at 5 stores in Lorain County.

We used the December 2007 payroll to determine eligibility. LCDJFS determined there were 10,200 eligible children. We even reviewed the January 2008 payrolls and determined eligibility for another 600 children. Letters were sent to each of those households instructing the families on how to receive the gift cards.



It was very simple what the recipients of the letters need to do to get the gift cards:

1. They had to retain the original letter and show it for eligibility.
2. The Adult who must also be the case name must show a current and valid picture ID. This would identify the person in receipt of the letter as the responsible person of the case.
3. For each child identified as eligible on the letter, the person presenting the letter had to attest that each child eligible in their household was actually living in the home and enrolled in school for the 2007-2008 school year.

LCDJFS opened the office on two Saturdays in March, the 1st and 8th, to allow people to redeem the letters for the School Shoe Gift Cards. March 1 saw everyone eligible from the city of Lorain visiting the office. We issued 4,544 gift cards on that day. The big snow storm hit on March 8 but we were open because we knew people would still venture out and come to our office. We opened the switch board and took calls on other lines to convince people not to drive in the snow. We informed anyone who called about the additional pick-up days. The weather did not hinder us from issuing 1,684 shoe cards on March 8. The additional schedules pick-up days were Tuesday evenings, March 11th, 18th, and 25th from 3:30 pm to 6:30 PM. This office was very busy on those days. Actually Ron Smith, my Administrative Assistant, is still servicing people with letters and working the “I didn’t get a letter or lost my letter” list. We are trying to get everyone cards who were eligible.

Just another tidbit about the give-away: LCDJFS purchased 10,883 gift cards for \$100 a piece. We determined eligibility for 11,200 children. We sent out letters to more recipients than we had cards because the last two give-away programs have proven that some people do not come to the office to get the cards. We understand that our customers move around a lot in Lorain County. Many move out of county and out of state. Any letters that return from the mailing are researched, phone calls made, and letters re-mailed to families. As of March 31, we still had 1,500 gift cards still in the safe. Where are these children and why don’t the parents or guardians take advantage of these fantastic programs. One thing I can say, those families who do take advantage are so appreciative of what we are giving the children. It does help their budgets and makes the children feel good in school.

Contact LCDJFS



42485 North Ridge Road
Elyria, Ohio 44035-1057
Phone: 440-323-5726
Fax: 440-323-3422
TTY/TDD: 440-284-4125
Child Support Office: 440-284-4401

Hours of Operation:
7:30-4:30 Mon, Wed, Thurs, Fri
7:30-6:30 Tue

