

## **SOCIAL SERVICES FUND SUMMARY**

The Weld County Department of Human Services continues to adapt to the Legislative and Programmatic changes imposed on us from the State and Federal levels. The impacts from prior years' legislation, such as HB 14-1317, SB 15-012, and SB 15-242, continue to impact our decision-making. The funding for additional caseworkers, originally funded through SB 15-242 continues into Fiscal Year 2017-18, providing Weld County with funding for four additional positions, two of which are new and two of which were formerly funded through the IV-E Waiver. Concerns have been raised, both by counties and by the State of Colorado, as to the long-term sustainability of these activities, once the IV-E Waiver period is completed. We are hopeful that enabling legislation and policies will allow for the continued creative use of IV-E funding to avoid costly and non-beneficial out-of-home placements through the use of prevention and early intervention activities, as well as kinship placements. The Colorado Legislature acted in advance of the publication of the County Administration Workload study to appropriate an additional \$19 million, from Federal, State and Local sources, to fund County Administration activities.

The total Social Services Fund budget is \$40,935,653. The programs are funded by property tax of \$11,403,328, state and federal funds of \$29,532,325, and the potential use of fund balance to cover unanticipated cost overruns.

Medicaid caseloads have grown significantly in the past several years, partially due to economic factors and partially due to Colorado's implementation of the Affordable Care Act. From May 2015 to May 2016, the number of Weld County residents enrolled in Medicaid grew from 67,732 to 73,453, an 8.4% increase. However, we are starting to see signs that it is leveling off, with the most recent report showing a total of 75,012 enrollees. Approximately 25% of Weld County residents are now enrolled in Medicaid. The LEAP (Low-Income Energy Assistance Program) is now administered by Discover Goodwill, through a direct contractual agreement with the State of Colorado. Weld County's role in administering the program will be limited to resource referral and marketing.

Prevention and Early Intervention will be a key focus of the Department in the coming years. A distinct Division is being created within the Department to address needs as they are presented to assist families in resolving conflict or neglect issues before they rise to the level of adjudicated dependency and neglect. We will be utilizing and coordinating a variety of funding sources to provide for these needs, while ensuring fiscal accountability and meaningful outcomes are achieved.

Weld County will be starting Fiscal Year 2017-2018 with a reasonably adequate amount of TANF County Reserve, which will serve to insulate us, to some extent, from the requirement to use county-only funds in covering Child Welfare and Colorado Works over-expenditures. Colorado will be focusing much more attention, in coming years, on assisting TANF participants to obtain gainful, self-sufficient employment.