

Athens County Job and Family Services



2013 Annual Report



From our director:

One of the first things we did after I started here as Director more than 30 years ago was to draft an agency mission statement. We put a lot of thought and debate into it. It was important that it reflect our true feelings about our role in the community. I would like to think that we have remained true to that mission.

I can not thank our staff enough for all of their dedication and hard work to help the citizens of Athens County.

I am also continually grateful for the support of the Athens County Commissioners and the community for our programs and agency.

Thank you
Jack Frech

Mission Statement

Our Mission: As the employees of the Athens County Department of Job & Family Services, we have been charged with the most serious and important responsibility in government, that of helping our fellow citizens who experience the despair of poverty, hunger, homelessness, and ill health. We believe that our programs represent the conscience of society and that our strength lies in seeking a decent life for all.

**Athens County Job and Family Services is led by the Athens County Commissioners:
Lenny Eliason, Charlie Adkins, Chris Chmiel**

**Athens County Job and Family Services Director Jack Frech
(740) 797-2523 1-800-762-3775
<http://jfs.athensoh.org>**



Athens County

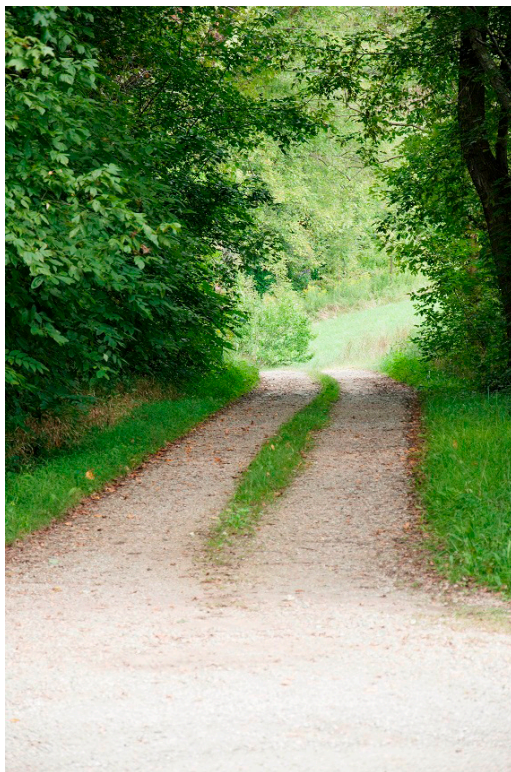
Athens County has a population of 63,304, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Our county has two cities, Athens (pop. 23,755) and Nelsonville (pop. 5,349) and several villages.

The county is home to some of the finest outdoor recreation areas in the state, a world-class university (Ohio University), a nationally-recognized two-year college (Hocking College), one of the best farmer's markets in the country, a wide range of businesses ranging from high-tech companies to independent farmers, numerous outstanding healthcare facilities and countless other attractions.

Athens County has a rich history and potential for a bright future. At the same time, many of the problems that are prevalent throughout Appalachia are also present here. More than 31 percent of the county residents live in poverty, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. By comparison, the poverty rate for all of Ohio is 14.8 percent. In addition, the median household income is \$33,546 and is well below the state median income of \$48,071. Also, the median value of owner occupied homes is \$117,400 in Athens County, compared to the state median value of owner occupied homes of \$135,600, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

Due to the nation's recent economic problems, a large number of people in our region and around the nation receive at least one form of public assistance. At the same time, though, there is a great misunderstanding about what public assistance really provides. Here are some facts about public assistance in Ohio:

- In Ohio, more than two-thirds of all Ohio Works First (OWF) cash assistance cases are "child only" cases, meaning that these are primarily children living with grandparents or other relatives, not with their parents.
- The average cash assistance benefit in Ohio is \$183 per person per month or \$4,416 per year for a family of two.
- The average Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefit per person in Ohio is \$132 per month per person.
- Ohio averaged 143,230 cash assistance recipients per month in 2013, compared to 1,821,827 food assistance recipients per month.
- In Ohio, only about 10 percent of cash assistance recipients also receive housing assistance.





Our Budget

Our budget is a made up of a mix of local, state and federal funds used for a wide variety of programs designed to help families and individuals in need. The largest amount of funding is spent on the Medicaid program.

Ohio Works First	\$3,813,805.00
Disability cash assistance (aged, blind and disabled)	\$241,634.00
Prevention, Retention and Contingency program	\$146,842.47
Food Assistance program	\$17,356,001.00
Contract Services	\$718,312.78
Administrative costs	\$1,503,779.29
Direct services	\$4,647,707.59
Child support enforcement	\$2,122,931.00
Medicaid	98,591,698.21

TOTAL for Fiscal Year 2013	\$129,142,711.34
<i>TOTAL Fiscal Year 2012</i>	<i>\$122,958,049.68</i>

Note: The Contract Services portion of the budget goes toward funding for several important programs and services, including:

- Transportation services to assist Medicaid clients traveling to and from doctors appointments.
- The summer youth employment program administered by the Hocking-Athens-Perry Community Action Program (HAPCAP).
- A Work Experience Program coordinated by HAPCAP to provide work and job training opportunities for public assistance recipients in Athens County.



Our Programs

Ohio Works First (OWF) – An average of 2,001 recipients per month

OWF is Ohio's cash assistance program. The program is only available to families with dependent children, and they can only receive it for a total of 36 months. The major goal of the program, which has work requirements, is to help participants move toward employment. The maximum amount that a family of two can receive in cash assistance each month is \$374. The maximum monthly allotment for a family of four is \$564.

Food Assistance Program – An average of 11,476 recipients per month

Ohio's Food Assistance program is part of the federal government's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Formerly known as Food Stamps, this program provides benefits that can be used to purchase food or food products intended for human consumption. Benefit levels vary depending on the number of people in a household. Also, recipients must meet certain work requirements. The average monthly benefit per household in Athens County during fiscal year 2013 was \$265. Benefit levels for all U.S. residents receiving SNAP declined at the beginning of November 2013 by an average of \$10 per person.

Medicaid – 13,103 clients receive Medicaid coverage each month

The Medicaid program provides health care coverage for certain low-income and medically vulnerable individuals. Medicaid programs include coverage for families, children and pregnant women; aged, blind and disabled individuals; women with breast/cervical cancer; and individuals in institutional care. The Medicaid program is set to greatly expand on Jan. 1, 2014. Expanding the eligibility up to 138 percent of the federal poverty level will give a large number of Athens County residents with no health insurance new access to healthcare.

Child Support Enforcement - Collected \$5,875,829.44 in support payments

The program's goal is to ensure that all children are supported financially by both parents. Services provided include: location of non-custodial parents; paternity establishment; establishment and modification of child support orders; collection of child support payments and/or alimony; and enforcement of child support orders, medical support orders and alimony. The program collects support payments for more than 5,100 children each month. During the last year, the Child Support Enforcement Agency completed 321 DNA tests and established paternity in 112 cases. The county's child support customer hotline received an average of 871 phone calls per month.



Our Programs

Adult Protective Services – Took on 110 new cases this year

Referrals for this program are taken from anyone having a reasonable cause to believe an individual who is age 60 or older is being abused, neglected or exploited. The intent of the program is to assist Athens County adults who are in danger of harm, unable to protect themselves and have no one else who is able to assist them. This program continues to see an increase in the need for assistance.

Prevention, Retention and Contingency (PRC) Program – Provided \$150,196

in assistance The PRC program provides emergency and short-term assistance for families with dependent children or a pregnant woman in the household. The need should be emergent, unforeseeable, and unavoidable.

Healthchek – 10,383 visits completed during the year

Prevention and treatment services offered through the Medicaid program for children up to the age of 19. The goal of the Healthchek program is to help children to become healthy and stay healthy.

County Medical Services (CMS) – Completed 1,710 referrals and 220 approvals for disability assistance

This program provides limited medical benefits for clients who are waiting on disability determination from the Social Security Administration and have been approved by state reviewers for this disability program.

Homemaker Home Health Aide Program – Conducted an average of 165 home visits per month

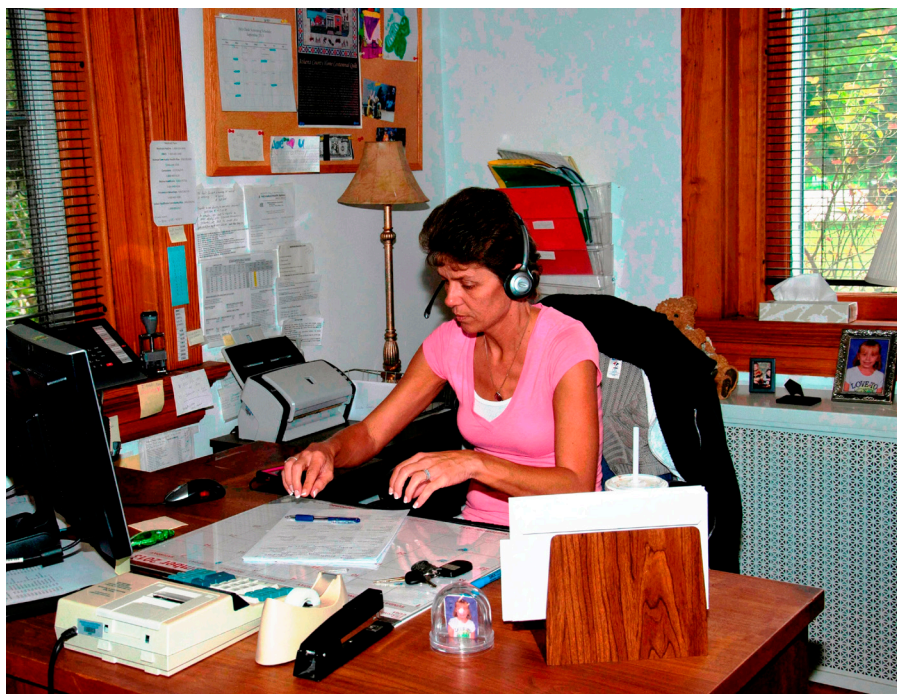
This program provides homemaker and home health aide services to clients who are 60 years of age or older.

Transportation Services – 29,959 one-way transports made by staff or contract; 16,519 gas vouchers issued

Transportation is available to and from medical appointments and social service agencies for recipients of Medicaid or Title XX (over age 60 and income eligible). Vouchers to cover gas expenses and bus tickets are also available for medical appointments. The gas vouchers that were issued equaled a total value of \$191,215.

Voter registrations – 766 Athens County residents registered to vote

This includes 397 new registrations and 369 address changes for registered voters.



Our Programs

Child Care Assistance – 202 Athens County children served by certified child care providers each month

This program provides assistance to help Athens County parents/guardians who are working or in school pay for child care with a certified provider. Our agency works with more than 50 licensed child care providers in Athens County. We provided \$592,511 in child care payments for local families in the last year.

Emergency Food Line – Distributed 5,775 food boxes/bags during the year

The Food Line is responsible for screening telephone requests, determining eligibility, maintaining records and directing those in need to a local food distribution site. Our agency works with the Athens County Food Panty and the St. Vincent de Paul Society to provide food boxes to local families who meet income guidelines and other requirements. The number of food boxes distributed by our agency increased by more than 500 over the previous year. The food pantries we work with report that they are seeing more people coming in for food every month and they are having a difficult time keeping up with the demand. Our agency routinely runs out of food boxes due to high demand from families in need.

Disability Assistance – Average of 207 recipients each month

This program provides a very small and time-limited amount of cash and/or medical assistance to disabled individuals who meet income requirements, do not have more than \$1,000 in resources, and are not eligible for other assistance programs. The maximum monthly benefit is \$115 for individuals and \$159 for households with two people.

Income Maintenance and Social Program Coordinator (SPC) Counseling - Helped 719 clients gain employment

Income Maintenance employees and SPCs help clients with the different public assistance programs that our agency offers. The SPCs also assess clients to get them into work, education and job training programs designed to help them become self-sufficient. During the last year, 719 clients reported gaining employment.



Our Programs

Job Fair – The Work Station worked with the OhioMeansJobs centers from Meigs and Perry counties to hold a regional job fair at the Athens Community Center in the spring. Approximately 400 area residents attended the Job Fair and spoke with employers from the around region about job opportunities. Several of the employers were hiring, and a large number of people who attended the Job Fair reported to us that they found work through the contacts they made at the event. The Work Station coordinates programs with the OhioMeansJobs centers in Meigs and Perry counties throughout the year.

Athens County Reentry Program - Average caseload of 247 clients per month

Our Reentry Program, which is part of the Athens County Reentry Task Force (see below) serves as a resource for ex-offenders in the community, as well as area residents who will soon be leaving prison and returning to Athens County, to help them rebuild their lives. Our Reentry Coordinator meets with clients, takes part in judicial hearings and helps clients find jobs, housing and support in the community. In 2013, our program added 111 new clients to the caseload.

Athens County Reentry Task Force – Our agency helped to start this community coalition, which meets monthly and is dedicated to assisting Athens County residents as they return from jail or prison. The goal of the task force is to reduce recidivism and help the community. The Task Force meets every month at the Athens County Job and Family Services County Home Building.

Citizen Circle - The Work Station hosts the monthly Citizen Circle meetings, which are held to provide support for ex-offenders. Representatives of several community organizations attend the Citizen Circle meetings to talk with ex-offenders about the challenges they are facing and to see how they can provide assistance.



The Work Station

Located in The Plains, The Work Station houses our employment services programs, adult education programs and a variety of other services for area residents and local employers. All of the services are offered for free.

One main part of The Work Station is our OhioMeansJobs center. Every county in the state has an OhioMeansJobs center, which is a place county residents can go to for free employment services. Previously, these centers were all known as One Stop centers. In the summer of 2013, the state changed the names of all of these centers to OhioMeansJobs centers. The wide range of free services offered at The Work Station have not changed.



Employment Services at The Work Station – Assisted 1,785 clients, visited 264 employers and helped at least 249 Athens County residents become employed

Our Employment Counselors provide free assistance with resumes and/or job searches. The counselors meet with area residents individually and in group setting. The employment counselors and Work Station Director also meet regularly with local employers to discuss the job market and their employment needs.

Workforce Investment Act (WIA): Adult and Dislocated Workers – Assisted an average of 25 people per month

This program provides Athens County residents with employment and training opportunities to help them obtain a job or find a better job. Services include resume preparation, job search assistance, job placement assistance, initial assessments, and information on community services and programs. Due to limited funding, this program currently has a waiting list for Athens County residents to get into it.

Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Youth Services – Assisted an average of 62 people per month

This program provides employment and training opportunities for low-income Athens County residents between the ages of 14-21. Enrollment is also limited in this program due to funding constraints.



Our Programs

Adult and Basic Literacy Education (ABLE) program – Helped 52 students earn their GEDs

This program provides educational programs to adults who want to earn their GEDs. Educational services are offered by our teachers at The Work Station and Tri-County Career Center. Students of all ages study at The Work Station throughout the year as they prepare to take their GED exams. Each year in the spring, the ABLE program holds a graduation ceremony in order to honor all of its graduates. The state is changing the GED exam in 2014, moving it to a computerized test. Part of the change will be a much higher testing fee.

Workshops - The Work Station holds free workshops on a wide range of topics of interest to Athens County residents. Some of the workshops are targeted toward specific audiences such as ex-offenders, veterans, and grandparents raising their grandchildren, while others are beneficial to all area residents.

Services for Veterans - Veterans representatives have offices in The Work Station to provide assistance to area residents. The representatives talk with veterans about educational opportunities, employment services and other programs available to help them.

Comments from our clients

- I recently lost my job after almost 2 years. I am a single mother of 3 and receive very little help from my kids' dad. I now have no insurance and have medications which are for my heart and I cannot be without them. My kids also have medical conditions which require frequent doctor appointments.
- I lost my job almost seven months ago. Now my teeth are falling out from periodontal disease and complications of diabetes. I worked in the food and beverage industry for 35 years as a server/bartender/manager. Now, no one will hire me because of my dental problems. My car broke down on the way back from Florida, so I had to abandon it (could not afford to fix it) on the side of the road. Luckily, I knew someone with a farm who was willing to let me rent a room if I committed to helping on the farm come springtime.
- I have a family of four plus expecting one in September. I work very hard in the construction business, make decent money all at the same time am suffering from a spinal disease, a messed up shoulder and knee... If it weren't for the little assistance that I did receive then I would not be able to survive or support my family.
- We are applying for help for our grandson, he is 16. We have been raising him since he was a baby. My husband has retired, had a stroke and we are financially unstable currently. We need medical help for our grandson and possible cash assistance.
- Struggling to come up with money to pay the bills or buy food.
- I am working at a minimum wage job trying to support my family and after I pay for my rent and child care I am left with no money to buy food, gas or any of our basic needs.
- The financial hardship I am facing is not receiving enough money to get through the month because \$450.00 isn't enough to pay bills and get things for my child and then I am expected to work 40 hours a week to work off what little money I am given...That barely gets my family through the month, let alone pays for the gas to get back and forth to work.
- I cannot find a job right now and need help buying food.
- I have no way to the doctor.
- I am unable to work due to injury. I now have my daughters and have to get help till I can get back to work.
- I have no income and no way to pay for anything because I've been unable to find work since release from prison.
- I am responsible for two kids. I have rent, electric, gas and telephone bills to pay and I just lost my job and have no income.
- I don't have a place to live and I don't have a job. I stay at different people's houses each night.
- I lost my job after 13 years and am having a hard time finding a new job.
- My husband is currently in prison. I make \$157.00 per week, that is not enough to put in gas to get back and forth to work. The rest is for household supplies. We barely make ends meet. I also pay \$109.00 a month for the electric. I am having a hard time supplying my children with what they need.
- Our family receives food assistance. We struggle every month to make it with our food benefits, however, we never make it through the month.

Contact us:

County Home Building

13183 State Route 13, (located near Chauncey)

Family Services

(740) 797-2523 or 1-800-762-3775

Child Support

(740) 593-5046 or 1-800-436-8933

Denver White Building

184 N. Lancaster St., Athens

(740) 592-4477 or 1-800-338-4484

The Work Station

70 North Plains Road, The Plains

(740) 797-1405 or 1-877-351-0405

Administrative Office

Connett Road, The Plains

(740) 797-2523 or 1-800-762-3775



Athens County Job and Family Services Mailing Address:

13183 State Route 13

Millfield Ohio 45761-9901

(740) 797-2523

1-800-762-3775

E-mail: jfs@athensoh.org

Main Website: jfs.athensoh.org

Website for The Work Station: ohiomeansjobs.com/Athens

Blog: athensjfs.blogspot.com

Facebook: Athens County Job and Family Services

Twitter: Athens County JFS

For additional information on our programs; publications and reports; additional statistics; data and information on poverty and poverty-related issues, visit our website, jfs.athensoh.org, or contact our Community Relations Office at (740) 677- 4258 or 1-800-762-3775.

Athens County Job and Family Services is an equal opportunity employer and service provider.

(12/13)