



2006 Annual Report

Department of Human Services

Strengthening Families and the Community

EL PASO



COUNTY



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Our Vision:

To eliminate poverty
and family violence in El Paso County

Our Mission:

To strengthen families, assure safety,
promote self-sufficiency, and improve
the quality of life in our community

Reviewing 2006

“Strengthening families, protecting children, promoting self-sufficiency and improving the quality of life in our community are the goals we strive to achieve as a Department. Serving the community is our primary focus. Key accomplishments of our dedicated staff are highlighted below.”



Barbara J. Drake, Director
El Paso County
Human Services

Key Accomplishments

- **Family preservation and prevention** units served an average of 1,110 families with 2,160 children each month, outside the child welfare system.
- **TANF diversion rates climbed** steadily from 32% to 55% by the end of the year. This means 55% of all families applying for TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) were diverted from welfare to short term assistance and employment. The employment rate in 60 day Diversion rose to 68% and continues to increase.
- **Aging and Adult Services** protects adults and helps maintain their independent status. Business process changes improved efficiency and the backlog of Adult Medicaid and Nursing Home applications. Processing time for long term care dropped from 120 to an average of 60 days. Adult Protection responded to 908 reports of elder abuse and provided guardianships to 45 adults.
- **Fountain Valley Senior Center** continued to provide transportation, group meals, home meal delivery, recreation and health related activities assisting Fountain Valley seniors at a higher rate than 2005.
- **Child Welfare Intake** made parental substance abuse identification, treatment and recovery a number one priority in 2006. A new assessment process was introduced in late 2005 and by Sept. of 2006, 100% of substance abusing parents appeared for their first appointment, up from 50% in January of 2006.
- **Children living in family foster care** were reduced by 7.5% from a 399 monthly average in 2005 to 369 in 2006. Poverty is one of the most significant issues for families involved in the child welfare system. Child protection workers utilize multiple strategies to assure basic safety and self-sufficiency needs are being met.
- **Youth ages 10 – 21** with complex needs may now take advantage of *wraparound facilitation* made possible through the HB 1451 initiative in 2006. One treatment plan is developed by a family centered team. *Wraparound* family meetings engage youth and their families in solving the truancy, education, mental health, substance abuse or whatever issues or behaviors led to probation, parole or involvement with the Department of Human Services.
- **Involving the community in serving children and families** through a network of private/public and faith-based partners. Some examples of community participation include: Feed the Children; Women Helping Women; Christmas for Kids including 4-Wheeler Extravaganza, Bear Project, and presents for 800 children; Easter Baskets for Kids; and handmade quilts from the Piecing Partners Quilt Guild.

Respectfully,

Barbara Drake

Barbara J. Drake, Director
El Paso County Department of Human Services
(719) 444-5532 or BarbaraDrake@elpasoco.com

TANF and Child Welfare Service Integration

Through Service Integration, El Paso County Human Services has:

- Reduced the number of families on welfare without using sanctions or punitive approaches
- Reduced the number of children and youth in foster care
- Reduced number of children in institutional placements
- Increased safety of children

Why we initiated Integrated Services:

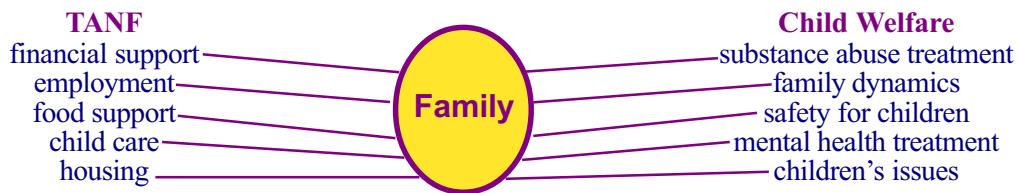
TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families)

- Too many families in poverty
- Families facing multiple barriers to self-sufficiency
- New emphasis on employment
- Need child well-being and safety expertise in TANF

Child Welfare

- Too many children in out-of-home care
- Need to improve outcomes for child safety, permanency and well-being
- Resources in child welfare insufficient to meet poverty needs of families

Leveraging systems' strengths provide more complete support to families



El Paso County's Integrated System includes:

- Combining child welfare workers and TANF techs into one unit
- Giving families access to resources of both TANF and child welfare
- Providing flexible funding from TANF and child welfare

Service Integration yields:

- Greater ability to serve high-need families receiving TANF
- Access to broader services for families in child welfare
- Ability to meet requirements of both programs with a single case plan
- Ability to "one-stop shop" with co-location of TANF, child welfare, other staff and community partners
- Reduction in paperwork
- Reduction in court involvement
- More flexible funding and services

El Paso County Integrated Services Outcomes:

Reduce number of families on welfare		
1996 - 4,072 monthly caseload	46.4% reduction	2006 - 2,183 monthly caseload
Reduce number of children and youth in foster care		
1996 - 591 monthly average	37.6% reduction	2006 - 369 monthly average
Reduce number of youth in residential treatment		
1996 - 183 monthly average	40% reduction	2006 - 110 monthly average
Reduce El Paso County reabuse rate		
	1.44% reabuse	Federal goal - 6.1% or less Children & Family Service Review

2006 Department Indicators

Average Monthly Caseload Summary

Program Area	Monthly Average
Adult Financial Assistance	2,631
Adult Medical Assistance	6,855
Colorado Works (TANF)	2,183
County Diversion	112
Employment First	3,670
Expedited Food Stamps	3,391
Family Medical Assistance	13,778
Food Stamps	13,565
Long Term Care	3,218
Medical Savings Program	1,983
Workforce Development	4,207
TOTAL:	55,591 Cases



Assistance with food (food stamps) - \$43,733,294 was issued to community members for the purchase of food. Each month approximately 1,007 new applications were received. Human Services determines eligibility and every month there was an average of 13,565 cases. This assistance helps low-income families put food on their tables. Thirty percent of families receiving food stamps are working, but still qualify for food assistance under national poverty guidelines.



Medicaid - provides health care for thousands of low-income people in our community every month. It covers basic health care needs such as: physician services; pharmacy; hospitalization; children's dental and eye care; mental health treatment; and nursing home/long term care. El Paso County Medicaid providers were paid \$298 million in 2006 which included \$48 million for nursing home care. Every month averaged 22,616 Medicaid cases for low-income families with children, foster children, low-income elderly, pregnant women, and adults with developmental disabilities.

LEAP (Low-income Energy Assistance Program) - 13,299 families received assistance with their 2006 heating bills totaling \$6,626,524. LEAP helps low-income households with their winter heating costs. This program runs from November 1 through April 30.

2006 Department Indicators

TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) -

2,183 average monthly cases on TANF including more than 992 child-only cases. An average of 263 new applications were received monthly. TANF helps families seek employment, overcome barriers, and reach self-sufficiency. 4,350 participants, agency-wide, found employment through Goodwill. El Paso County requires parents to participate in work activities. **Child-only TANF** is specifically for children. Sixty-four percent of all child-only cases are children living with relatives other than their parents.



Assistance with child care expenses - an average of 1,830 families with 3,850 children received assistance monthly. A total of \$9,736,952 was directed to child care costs. Low-income, working families may qualify for child care assistance through Colorado's Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP). This allows parents to use quality child care while they work. Parents make sliding scale co-payments to their child care providers.

The Center on Fathering - 869 fathers received services such as parenting training, community referrals, individual counseling, assistance with family service plans and domestic violence. On-going fathering support groups are also available at the Center. A total of 400 fathers took classes in 2006 including 95 first time fathers.



Child Support - \$38,422,771 was collected in child support payments for El Paso County. **Policy Studies, Inc. (PSI)** manages the county's Child Support Enforcement Program under the Department's oversight. Many families are able to make it on their own once they receive their court ordered child support. There was an average of 17,392 cases monthly.

Child abuse and neglect - 9,879 reports were received by the child welfare hotline (444-5700) last year. Of those, 7,462 were assessed. DHS is mandated by state law to respond to child abuse reports 24 hours a day, everyday. Caseworkers respond to verify children are safe and families receive necessary services. DHS works closely with families and other community agencies in both the prevention of child abuse and early intervention strategies targeting substance abuse, mental health concerns, family violence, and poverty — all primary factors involved in abuse and neglect of children in El Paso County. Anyone can report suspected abuse or neglect, but mandatory reporting is required of many professionals.



2006 Department Indicators



Safety and well-being of children - if a child abuse or neglect assessment determines further involvement is needed, the case may proceed to court. During this process it may be decided that it is not safe for the child to return home. In 2006, 1,408 children were placed in out-of-home care. These placements included foster and relative care as well as residential treatment. An average of 363 children were living with relatives; 369 children in family foster care; and 110 children in residential care per month.

The Family Visitation Center - provides a home-like setting so children living in foster care can visit with their families. Parents practice new parenting skills and spend supervised time with their children before they are returned from foster care. Visitation is an important step toward families reuniting. About 50% of the foster children are under the age of five and approximately 40% of the children are in “kin” or relative care.



A leader in adoptions - adoption is possible when it is impossible for the family to reunite and the parental rights have been terminated. During 2006, 105 children were adopted and 72% spent less than 24 months in our child welfare system—the Federal goal is 32%. The majority, 91 of the 105 children adopted, were under the age of ten. Adoption workers are getting involved earlier with prospective adoptees’ cases in order to expedite adoptions.

Chafee Foster Care Independence Program provides services for teens in foster care getting ready to go out into the world on their own after age 18. Of the **201 Chafee Teens** in the program last year (up 9%), 164 were employed, 96 completed their GED or High School Diploma. 37 are attending college and 5 are attending technical schools. Ninety participants had at least one other support person in their lives other than their Chafee Caseworker.



The Wraparound Coalition for Youth and Families uses a wraparound process so youth and their families can work with a facilitator to build **one plan** where the family’s voice and choice are emphasized. The facilitator helps develop teams to look at each family’s situation. Approximately 600 youth engaged in delinquency, truancy, gang problems, or drug and alcohol abuse, could be served by this effort as it develops. Youth may need something apart from traditional school, legal and social programs to be able to turn the corner and make better decisions.

2006 Department Indicators

Adult Protection - received 908 calls, and serves anyone 18 years and older who may be at risk of financial exploitation, physical abuse, or self-neglect. When adults don't have the ability to make decisions for themselves or take care of their own needs, the Department may file for guardianship in Probate Court. Last year 45 new guardianships were filed. Family members and other community agencies work with Adult Protection to assure all available resources are being considered and used.



Adult Financial Assistance - Adult Medicaid and Long Term Care Programs provide over 90 variations of benefits to eligible adults in our community. Every month an average of 2,631 cases received financial assistance and 6,855 cases received Medicaid/nursing home care. Over \$4,000,000 is paid every month for nursing home costs. Payments are made for Aid to the Blind, Aid to the Needy Disabled, Old Age Pension, nursing and extended care.

Fountain Valley Senior Center - is a public/private partnership between the Fountain Valley Senior Center and El Paso County. It provided transportation (21,745 rides), group meals (22,132 meals served including rural meal deliveries), and recreation for seniors in the southern and eastern parts of the county. Rural Transit Authority (RTA) funds and Colorado Department of Transportation grants fund the transportation program consisting of a fleet of 11 buses and vans. Door-to-door service enables seniors to keep medical appointments, do their shopping, and participate in group activities. Combined, these offerings provide the opportunity for seniors to remain independent.



Veteran and Military Affairs Office - El Paso County has over 76,000 veterans, and the total benefit payments for veterans, their widows and widowers was \$162,000,000 in 2006, or \$2,125 per veteran. The office is committed to several outreach programs for homeless veterans. For the past 14 years, with the support of the Board of County Commissioners, this office has been the most productive county veteran's office in the state with over 8,300 office visits, 23,000 information phone calls, and 40 annual public presentations.



2006 Department Indicators



Colorado Benefit Management System (CBMS) - is the computer system that determines eligibility for public assistance. Even though processing benefits is getting better, CBMS is still time consuming. The **Help Desk Task Force** assists in resolving issues related to the computer system. When clients are not receiving their benefits, the Task Force researches the issues and recommends changes to improve efficiency. This integrated computer system will provide clients with many benefit options through one application.



Quality Assurance Program - DHS is committed to quality service and accountability that assures clients' needs are met in a timely and courteous manner. This program was developed to review clients' concerns and ensure excellence in customer service. Information gathered is used to improve programs and service delivery. Consumer Communication Forms are available in all Department lobbies.

Contract Services managed over \$40,000,000 in contracts with multiple organizations that support the economic assistance programs, child welfare services, adult services, and the administrative needs of the Department. Contracts are monitored regularly for compliance.



Wraparound Coalition Board Members (L to R starting with back row) Kelly Phillips-Henry, Frank Lilawsa, Kathy Moan, Robin Anderson, Julie Yoder, Art Navalta, John VanDenBerg, Eugenia Guentechera, Norma DeJesus, Palmer Johnson, Sara Sherwin, Michael Rovaris, and Karen Knabe.

Success Stories

It's all about the families

Memorial Hospital contacted Human Services after a divorced mother with three children was admitted under the influence of methamphetamines. As a result, the three children were placed with their father. The mother attended her drug treatment program and then she and the father worked diligently on their family's goals and successfully reached them. The biggest success, beyond completing their goals, was the parents' team work—enabling them to work together amicably in devising a joint parenting plan and showing a strong, united front for their three children.

A baby was born in a car at 27 weeks - 1 lb. 15 oz. The parents, in their early 20's, were struggling to cope with their 9 month old, work, lack of transportation and visiting the fragile infant. The case was assigned to the POWER Team, a special unit at DHS, that provides intensive services to families. One of their caseworkers transported parents and infant to medical appointments, physical therapy, and occupational therapy for 60 days. The worker acted as an intermediary between medical personnel and the parents to clarify any misunderstandings. The worker expedited Medicaid by helping the family gather required paper work and delivering the application. The infant is now growing and thriving. The parents learned to care for him and adjust to their expanded family.

A mother was parenting four children and expecting another when her husband was deployed to Iraq. During dad's deployment, a baby with special medical needs was born. The father couldn't return from Iraq, so the parents agreed to voluntarily place the special needs child in a foster home. The foster parent was a retired nurse, well qualified to handle a special needs infant. The mother learned from the foster parent. She was mentored on parenting and helped with life skills. After 90 days, the fragile child was returned to her mother. When the father returned from Iraq, he completed counseling and parenting classes and they are now able to care for all five children as a family.

What after foster care?

Kathy was removed from her home during her junior year due to serious safety concerns. A friend's family agreed to provide a home for Kathy, allowing her to continue at her high school. During Kathy's senior year, that family had to discontinue being a kincare home. DHS's Chafee Program (for foster teens getting ready to be on their own) was able to find a transitional apartment for her. Kathy found a job, worked part time and graduated from high school with honors. She started working and moved into her own apartment, while attending Pikes Peak Community College full time. She eventually wants to transfer to a four year college and major in accounting.

Trudy and her brothers and sisters were placed in foster care because their mother was unable to care for them due to developmental disabilities. Their mother worked with the Department and received support helping her meet her children's needs. Last year, the siblings returned home. As a high school senior in a pre-collegiate program, Trudy remained with her foster family since she was so close to graduation. She was named in the Mayor's 100 Outstanding Youth, and recently was awarded a prestigious scholarship to a major university. Her foster parents helped with her college search and took her to the east coast to visit various colleges. She will start working on a horticulture degree this fall. Both Trudy and her mother accomplished a lot in a short time.

Jessica went before a Juvenile Magistrate with probation violations. Because she had no family in Colorado Springs and was suffering from a serious methamphetamine addiction, DHS was asked to find a placement. After completing a drug and alcohol treatment program, she moved into a group home and started working at a nearby restaurant where she became a shift manager. She remains involved with her DHS caseworkers and attends Pikes Peak Community College. She wants to be an elementary school teacher. Jessica served as an officer of the Department of Human Services' Youth Advisory Board and advocates on behalf of youth in foster care whenever she has the chance.

Success Stories

Virginia and Joe

Virginia and Joe are the parents of four children— three boys ages 13, 7 and 3 and a 14 month-old daughter. As a family they are cohesive, loving and devoted to each other. It is that devotion that pulled them through their unexpected life change two years ago and got them to where they are today— back on the road to stability.

Married for 15 years, and high school sweethearts, Virginia and Joe lived in a nice home, with their two sons and a baby boy on the way. They were enjoying a comfortable lifestyle when their world came crashing down around them. Faced with legal issues, Joe lost his job of 15 years and over the next several months they lost their home and all their possessions.

Unable to escape their situation, they ended up living in an old 22-foot camper trailer. After spending a lot of time hiding behind the blinds in the trailer, not wishing to be seen by anyone, Virginia stepped outside her comfort zone and turned to TANF for assistance. A month after applying for TANF, Virginia and Joe were referred to Goodwill's Career Opportunity Program, where they spent the next ten months working diligently to stabilize and rebuild their lives. Goodwill offered job skills classes (among other things), and coordinated setting up quality child care so the couple could participate in work activities.

Virginia began a Community Work Experience Program (CWEP) position, a few months before the birth of her daughter. She was uneasy, feeling everyone pitied her. Juggling work, child care and bus schedules to get back to the trailer before the boys came home from school, was daunting. Wearing the same clothes, washing them in the sink, ducking under the wet garments as they dried in the camper and keeping the boys from touching them was a daily chore.

As she got to know her co-workers better, she started enjoying going to work. They asked about her pregnancy and everyone shared stories about their kids, swollen feet and aching backs. She was encouraged, even pampered, and she liked talking with adults again during the day. One day they gave her a framed certificate for being the best CWEP EVER! Most didn't know she had no place to hang it, but Virginia liked the way it felt to be part of something again and contributing.

Six weeks after giving birth to her daughter, Virginia was back at work and was offered a paid, entry-level position. Noticing her lack of wardrobe, her boss suggested she attend the next *Women Helping Women* event. Virginia got her first haircut in close to three years and took home more clothes than the closet in their one bedroom apartment could hold. She giggled gleefully every time she looked into the closet and found herself looking in the mirror again as well as inside herself. She began to ask herself what she wanted and how to get it done.

Feed the Children came around and had it not been for them, the year before, they may not have had Christmas dinner. So Virginia volunteered and brought her oldest son to carry boxes. Joe also secured a full time job and they moved into a bigger apartment, found a reliable car and a motorcycle for Joe to drive to work. Virginia worked her way up from entry level clerk to supervising five supervisors over the next few years.

Their combined experiences gave them the confidence and support needed to start over. But, it was Virginia and Joe's devotion and determination that got the job done. Congratulations! You are living proof that working hard towards a common goal reaps positive benefits for the whole family.



County Commissioners Sallie Clark, and Wayne Williams are the Board Liaisons to the Department. They are seen here with Barbara Drake, DHS Director.



Chairman of the Board of County Commissioners, Dennis Hisey, participating in the DHS 2006 **Feed the Children** event.



Resolution presentation declaring November as Adoption Month (L to R starting with back row) Commissioner Bensberg, Majja Schiedel, Barbara Drake, Daphne Barrett, Rebecca Barrett, Commissioner Hisey, Billy Jack Barrett, Toni Herman, Marie Parker, AJ Barrett, Jennifer Barrett, Anne Barrett, Commissioner Clark, and Yvonne Sletta. The Barretts have adopted four El Paso County children.



Executive Management Team for the Department of Human Services (L to R starting with back row) Christine Schmidt, Barbara Drake, Rick Bengtsson, Majja Schiedel, Shirley Rhodus, Roni Spaulding, Rebecca Jacobs, Elaine Johnsen.



Women Helping Women started in 1997. Denni Penilla, DHS Coordinator and Jo Mitchell (top right), El Paso County Republican Women. Jo is responsible for creating and keeping this “prepare for success” event going for women transitioning from welfare to work. Goodwill and other employers participate to make this a success every year.



Aging and Adult Services staff participated in **Make a Difference Day** by assisting residents of Cedarwood Health Care Center. Make A Difference Day is the nation’s largest day for volunteers to make their communities stronger.



Julie Yoder, Yvonne Sletta and Maija Schiedel with two El Paso County youth attending a **Breakthrough Series Collaborative** event. Breakthrough is a way of working in a target area, on a small scale, to test ideas to build successful permanence for youth leaving foster care. El Paso County is the only county in Colorado participating.

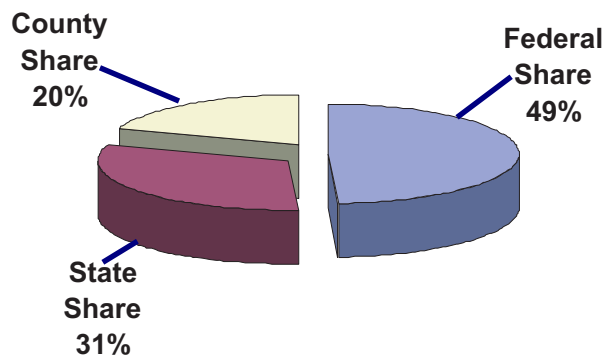
Budget Information

2005-2006 Calendar Year Expenditure Summary

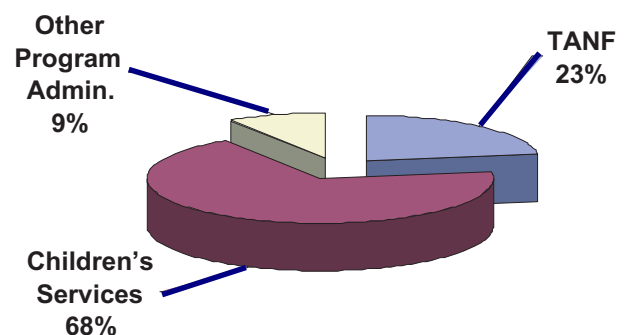
Cash Basis from CFMS System Reports -
Includes Federal, State and County Expenditures

	2005	2006	% Change	2006 County Share
Colorado Works net of Collections	\$ 18,094,536.67	\$ 17,536,156.52	-3.18%	\$ 3,125,722.60
Child Care	\$ 9,530,729.35	\$ 9,736,952.17	2.12%	\$ 1,153,817.82
Child Welfare Block Grant	\$ 37,199,582.82	\$ 37,078,613.99	-0.33%	\$ 5,893,520.37
Core Services (Child Welfare)	\$ 4,443,718.54	\$ 4,694,656.09	5.35%	\$ 649,417.28
HB 1414 activities (IV-E)	\$ 528,765.85	\$ 1,297,648.96	59.25%	\$ -
Preserving Safe and Stable Families	\$ 375,330.05	\$ 386,444.21	2.88%	\$ -
Chafee Independent Living	\$ 221,491.32	\$ 241,024.24	8.10%	\$ -
Family to Family Grant	\$ 13,664.74	\$ -		\$ -
Child Support Enforcement	\$ 4,240,072.94	\$ 4,513,593.99	6.06%	\$ 1,577,881.71
LEAP	\$ 4,753,822.49	\$ 6,982,356.27	31.92%	\$ -
Adult Program Benefits	\$ 7,058,334.61	\$ 7,742,826.79	8.84%	\$ 426,799.17
Food Assistance Fraud Admin	\$ 223,521.84	\$ 249,575.68	10.44%	\$ 62,393.92
Food Assistance Benefits net collections	\$ 41,599,966.10	\$ 43,733,025.72	4.88%	\$ -
Food Assistance Job Search	\$ 516,718.52	\$ 489,562.57	-5.55%	\$ 152,695.75
Title XX Training Grant	\$ 12,662.62	\$ 25,373.46	50.10%	\$ 6,720.27
Child Care Quality Grants	\$ 53,211.32	\$ 33,314.87	-59.72%	\$ -
Adoption Incentive Grant	\$ 4,900.00	\$ 4,949.63	1.00%	\$ -
School Readiness Grant	\$ 357,051.30	\$ 398,645.30	10.43%	\$ -
Child Support Grants	\$ 31,025.11	\$ 45,378.73	31.63%	\$ 2,268.93
CBMS Conversion special funding	\$ 1,121,404.29	\$ 678,369.35	-65.31%	\$ -
County Administration	\$ 3,844,910.62	\$ 4,484,867.88	14.27%	\$ 897,182.09
Non-Allocated Programs	\$ 105,266.79	\$ 215,394.28	51.13%	\$ 102,135.31
Sub-total	\$ 134,330,687.89	\$ 140,568,730.70		\$ 14,050,555.22
Various Recoveries & Credits	\$ (1,824,185.50)	\$ (2,000,708.64)		\$ (392,831.87)
Other local sources	\$ 1,293,723.39	\$ 1,205,798.17		
Total Expenditures	\$ 133,800,225.78	\$ 139,773,820.23		\$ 13,657,723.35
Federal & State Incentives and Revenue for County Local Share Use				\$ (2,948,831.23)
Total County Share Requirement				\$ 10,708,892.12

**Expenditures Requiring
County Match**



Funding Distribution





El Paso County Department of Human Services Locations

Main and Veterans Service Offices
105 N. Spruce
636-0000

Family Independence and Goodwill Career Development Centers
17 N. Spruce
636-0000

Family Visitation Center
701 E. Boulder
636-3366

Center on Fathering
325 N. El Paso
634-7797

Community Program Sites

Options for Long Term Care
2812 E. Bijou
457-0660

Sand Creek Family Services
1655 S. Murray Blvd.
667-2779

Lorraine Center
301 E. Iowa
Fountain
444-8100

Fountain Valley Senior Center
5745 Southmoor Drive
Fountain
520-6470

<http://dhs.elpasoco.com>

EL PASO



COUNTY