

# CT Department of Social Services: Overview of Services

▪ **VISION**

- We envision a Connecticut where all are healthy, secure, and thriving

▪ **MISSION**

- To make a positive impact on the health and well-being of Connecticut's individuals, families, and communities

▪ **VALUES**

- Pride in Public Service
- Excellence and Integrity
- Compassion and Empathy
- Equity and Inclusion
- Racial Justice
- Collaboration and Communication
- Learning and Innovation

- 1,600 employees
- Central Office – Hartford
- 12 Field Offices throughout CT
  - Established – 1993
- Total Budget SFY 2022 - \$4.5B

- The Department's statutory authority is found in Title 17b of the Connecticut General Statutes
- Designated as the state agency for the administration of:
  - The Connecticut Energy Assistance Program
  - The Refugee Assistance Program
  - The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program
  - The Medicaid program
  - The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
  - The State Supplement to the Supplemental Security Income
  - The State Child Support Enforcement Plan
  - The State Social Services Plan
  - The State plan for the Title XXI State Children's Health Insurance Program.

- DSS serves over 1 million residents (approximately 1 in 4 residents of CT) of all ages in all 169 cities and towns, supporting the basic needs of children, families and individuals, including older adults and persons with disabilities.
- With service partners, the agency provides health care coverage, food and nutrition assistance, financial assistance, child support services, energy aid, independent living services, social work services, protective services for the elderly, home-heating aid, and additional vital assistance.

- Husky (CT Medicaid):
  - No out-of-pocket cost healthcare coverage for 1 mill residents – more than half women and children
  - Covers 37% of births in CT
  - Provides reproductive health services at no cost
  - State-only funded abortion services (due to Federal prohibition)
  - Largest payer for nursing home and home care services for the elderly
- SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program)
  - Nutrition assistance for low-income households
  - Serves families, individuals, including elderly and disabled
- Social Services Block Grant
  - Protective Services for the Elderly
  - Domestic Violence Shelter support
  - Teen pregnancy prevention
- TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families)
  - Cash assistance for low-income families, primarily female heads of household

- Health care coverage and nutrition assistance have been shown to improve children's health outcomes as well as educational attainment
- Wide availability of reproductive health services through Husky in CT makes full range of family planning options available to low income women
- Broad spectrum of behavioral health services covered for both adults and children in CT, including inpatient and outpatient treatment for substance use disorders
- Husky coverage for prenatal care now available for undocumented women
- Full year of post-partum coverage recently added to Husky – will expand to undocumented women in 2023
- Husky coverage expanding to undocumented children aged 0-9 beginning next year
- New CoveredCT program will offer no out-of-pocket coverage to those who earn too much to qualify for Husky, up to 175% of federal poverty limit

- My path to leadership:
  - Public Schools!
  - BS in Public Health, MD, MPH and residency in Ob/Gyn
  - Long standing interest in the intersection between policy, academics and practice
  - Learned from the women I served
  - Career path: academic medicine, non—profit quality improvement, government service (State and Federal)
- Advice to my younger self and to women watching:
  - Trust yourself
  - Don't let others' expectations for you change your path
  - Believe that you are a leader
  - Be humble, lead with empathy
  - Kindness is never out of place