

assistance, public assistance to the needy blind, general public assistance, aid to the permanently and totally disabled, and any other social service and public assistance activities financed in whole or in part by the Social Services Administration. It has responsibility for the certification of low income families for medical assistance. In agreement with the United States Department of Agriculture, the Administration administers the food stamp program, which is available in all political subdivisions of the State whose governing body has agreed to provide certain administrative costs (Code 1957, 1969 Repl. Vol., Art. 88A, sec. 3).

In Baltimore City and in each county, there is a local department of social services whose directors administer these social service and public assistance activities within their respective locality, subject to the supervision, direction, and control of the State Administration. These welfare activities include: foster care services; adoption services to the natural parents, the child, and the adoptive parents so that in a legally responsible way the best interests of all concerned may be served; licensing of family homes giving care for not more than four children for a part of the twenty-four hour day; protective services on behalf of families with children who are suspected of being neglected or abused. Professional persons concerned with the welfare of children are required to report suspected child abuse to their local social services department. Examples of additional services provided by local departments of social services are: referrals for family planning, homemaker services which provide certain in-home services to help maintain and strengthen family life; services to single parents; and referrals to the Work Incentive Program operated by the Employment Security Administration (Code 1957, 1969 Repl. Vol., 1970 Supp., Art. 88A, secs. 19-32A; 1966 Repl. Vol., 1970 Supp., Art. 16, secs. 67-88; 1971 Repl. Vol., Art. 27, sec. 11A).

The Social Services Administration carries the responsibility for the development and the coordination of its services, for determining the factors which seem to contribute to social and economic problems, and for recommending changes or new programs to meet some of the problems. In carrying out this responsibility, the Social Services Administration calls upon the local social services departments for leadership within a community and for participation in Statewide activities.

The Social Services Administration exercises supervision over all public and private institutions which have the care, custody or control of dependent, abandoned or neglected children, except those placed under the supervision of another agency. It is authorized to establish a central registry of records for the purpose of locating deserting or absent parents of children who are likely, or liable to be, recipients of public assistance or foster care. The State Administration administers the child care laws, which regulate placement in Maryland. It licenses agencies and institutions having the care and custody of minors, including agencies giving day care services to children. The Social Services Administration maintains a central registry of reported child abuse cases (Code 1957, 1969 Repl. Vol., 1970 Supp., Art. 88A, secs. 3, 5A, 13, 15, 17, 19-32A; 1966 Repl. Vol., 1970 Supp., Art. 16, secs. 67-88; 1971 Repl. Vol., Art. 27, sec. 11A).

Each year before the General Assembly convenes, the State Administration furnishes to the Secretary of Employment and Social Services and to the Governor a report of its activities (Code 1957, 1969 Repl. Vol., 1970 Supp., Art. 88A, sec. 3(g)).