

SECTIONS
JOB AND FAMILY SERVICES MATTERS

We Are an
NVRA Designated Agency!

By Nichole Barcus

What does that mean you ask? Good question—let me explain..... The National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) of 1993 established procedures to increase the number of eligible citizens who register to vote. Those procedures set forth regulations making certain that their were mandatory designated agencies. Examples of mandatory designated agencies include, but are not limited to, the Department of Mental Health, Department of Developmental Disabilities, Rehabilitation Services Commission and the Department of Job & Family Services. A designated agency is required to distribute mail-in voter registration application forms, assist an applicant who requests help in completing the voter registration form and accept completed registration forms for transmittal to the local Board of Elections.

On September 21, 2006 the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN) along with two other individuals filed a lawsuit alleging violations of the NVRA of 1993 by the Ohio Secretary of State and the director of the Ohio Department of Job & Family Services. The plaintiffs alleged county departments failed to provide voter registration services to those applying or reapplying for public assistance benefits. On November 25, 2009 the parties in the case entered into a settlement agreement. The provisions of the settlement agreement brought about a multitude of changes for county agencies.

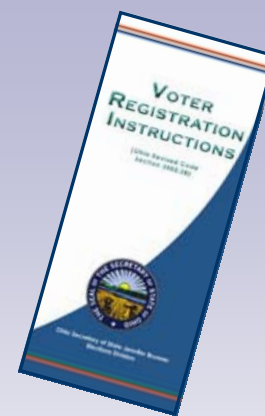
Our agency will now be monitored to ensure employees follow all NVRA regulations. Caseworkers must ask customers if they would like to register to vote at application, reapplication and change of address. A Notice of Rights and Declination Form is completed by each customer and filed in On-Base. The form includes a section where a customer can state they wish to register to vote or decline registration. A copy of the form is given to the customer and includes language explaining that registering does not affect their public assistance benefits and also provides contact information for the Sandusky County Prosecutor's office. If the customer wishes to register, they are given a voter registration application form.

Once it is completed, it is returned to the caseworker who immediately forwards the form to the agency's NVRA coordinator. The NVRA coordinator then transmits the forms to the Board of Elections within five days of receiving the registration form. It should be noted the agency cannot be identified on registration form.

Additional changes include revisions to the applications used by the agency as well as systemic changes. The JFS 7200 Request for Cash, Food and Medical Assistance has been updated to ask each applicant if they would like to register to vote.

Effective January 1, 2010 the CRISE system was updated requiring workers to note how a customer was offered voter registration—in person, by mail or on the application. These changes will ensure that all customers applying for public assistance will be offered the opportunity to register to vote.

The FIS Division has been working diligently to follow all of the proposed guidelines regarding voter registration. They will receive annual training regarding these issues to continue providing these services to the Sandusky County population.



****Nichole Barcus** is the NVRA Coordinator for Sandusky County DJFS. Please see her for all Voting issues/forms.**

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Child Support Chat—By Becky Bohn

“419-334-2909”

You know the old saying, “*what goes around comes around*”? How true! Effective January 4, 2010 the Child Support Division once again has our own **switchboard**. This was previously phased out in 2001. **Sandy Martin** and **Suzanne Spriggs** will be sharing the switchboard operator duties with back-up assistance from **Vicky Disher**. Some of their prior duties were reassigned to other staff members in order to accommodate this change. The first week there were **834** calls. According to Supervisor Beth Pfeiffer, “*we welcome the challenge of another exciting way to enrich the lives of all that we serve on a daily basis*”.

IEVS and FTI Safeguarding Reviews

In September 2009, the State conducted Income and Eligibility Verification System (IEVS) Processing and Federal Tax Information (FTI) Safeguarding reviews. Due to **Nancy Grove’s** hard work and efforts, the outcome of the review was great. There are no areas requiring improvement.

He’s Back!

Although he remains unable to perform his security duties, Nancy and I are thrilled that **Jim Steinmetz** has returned to work. Open up the flood gates – he is anxiously awaiting those FIS Addendums, fraud complaints, and enforcement follow-up letters!

CSEA at a Glance...

The following statistics are for 2009:

*8,101 clients were registered at the Front Desk

*Genetic testing was completed for 365 individuals

*Payments made at the Front Desk totaled \$247,372.82

*\$69,223.36 was collected under the FIDM Procedure

*Attorney Dean Ross represented CSEA at 713 court hearings

Children Services - By Jessica Murphy

The 2009 *Foster Care Christmas party* was a success despite budget hardships... With the help of DJFS employees, The Eagles, and Grace Lutheran Church, the placement unit was able to provide Sandusky County children in foster care a Christmas party. The agency held several events to help fund the party including employees bringing in needed party materials or money totaling \$97, a 50/50 raffle earning \$120.00, and a Bake Sale at Miller’s Grocery earning \$181.62. Also, the Fremont Eagles learned of our need from Gabby Henry and graciously donated \$200.00 for the event. Jodi Weltin is a member of Grace Lutheran church in Fremont, and the youth group worked together to donate gifts to the children from Santa Claus. (Who incidentally was portrayed by Rikki Brown’s wonderful husband.) Fort Ball catered the party with pizza, salad, and breadsticks and the bill for food and supplies totaled \$362.08. The remainder of the money, \$258.54, was placed in the Children Services Special Services Fund, which provides money for foster children to participate in extra-curricular activities. The generosity of the staff and community was greater than we could have imagined and helped make the Christmas party a success.

For many years, employees at DJFS helped provide children in custody with a wonderful Christmas by donating gifts. This year agency staff, foster parents, and the community went above and beyond to give our children a wonderful Christmas. For the fourth consecutive year, Jami Heberling’s church, Compassionate Ministries, donated Christmas presents to Sandusky County children in foster care. The children made a wish list and received gifts of clothes, CD’s, toys, and much more. The presents were delivered to them at their foster homes by their caseworkers. The placement unit’s beautiful Charlie Brown Christmas tree was set-up in the break room with name tags of children in custody. Employees of DJFS chose a name and generously donated pajamas to the foster children of Sandusky County. In years past, the agency has been able to reimburse Sandusky County foster parents \$100 for Christmas presents, however the rate was reduced for the 2009 year to \$50. To assist in purchasing Christmas presents, Stephanie Deneau, a Sandusky County foster parent, gave each foster family with foster children in the home a \$50 gift card to Wal-Mart. Without your generosity our kids may not have had a Christmas party or been given the gifts they wanted and so much deserve. Thank you for continuing to support the placement unit and the children of

AGENCY FYI.....

When filling out your time sheet don’t forgot to write down your sick reason. (self ill, self appt., dependent ill, dependent appt., etc.)

Workforce Development—By Janet Quaintance

In the October edition of the Agency Newsletter, we wrote how Stimulus Funds of over \$600,000 were obligated by July and that we requested additional funds and were approved for \$92,000.00 more. Well, guess what? All of those funds have been obligated. What that means is that those funds have been obligated to the WIA customers who we have enrolled in training. They are set aside so to speak for those customers needs. This is for the Program Year 2009. The Program Year ends 6-30-10. Hopefully we will receive more funding in July 2010 as we normally receive funding in July for the next program year.

With this being said, we have made an additional request of funds to The State of Ohio for Rapid Response Funds. These funds are normally for when a place of business is closing and we need to go in and speak about our services to those employees. Well the State has made training funds available so we have requested some of the funds. The next edition, we can report if we actually received the funds.

You may or may not have seen “Al Turner Tiv” (Alternative) our GIANT snowman in The Job Store. Al was created by Janet Quaintance, Kendra Sherman and one of our partner staff, Phil Johnson of EHOVE Career Center. Al was entered into the snowman contest and tied with Tami Ward’s unit. However, Al will stay up in The Job Store all winter and is actually there to promote “Green” careers. He is there with information for job seekers who are looking for alternative or green careers. If you have not been over to see Al, you really need to!

I know many of you have heard of our “Water Coolers” we have at The Job Store every Tuesday morning. I know this because many of you have called me because you have heard me page about the Water Cooler starting at 8:05. We began these in October. The Water Coolers are a very brief and informal gathering of Job Store staff and partners. We meet and everyone gets a chance to announce to the group what they have going on in their agency, whether it be ODJFS, TDH Enterprises who have the OJT Contract, etc. This is a quick, up to the minute sharing of information that we pass on to the customers who come into the Job Store. The staff and partners love it as we are more aware of what is going on around us as well as better equipped to serve our customers.

As Emergency HEAP is in full swing, we have seen a decrease in customers for the utility programs we have such as AEP’s Neighbor to Neighbor and Ohio Fuel Funds. This is because they need to go to WSOS first and then if a disconnect still exists after the Emergency HEAP payment or if they are denied, they can come to see about help from AEP’s Neighbor to Neighbor and Ohio Fuel Funds. This will be short lived as once they get their Emergency HEAP payment and are scheduled for another disconnect, they can come into our agency and see if they are eligible for additional help with Neighbor to Neighbor or Ohio Fuel Funds.

2009 FOURTH QUARTER ANNIVERSARIES			
OCTOBER		DECEMBER	
Deborah McGrath	9 years	Rachel Gundy	7 years
Lisa Mullholand	9 years	Davi Anderson	4 years
Crystal Vail	8 years		
Rikki Brown	3 years		
Mandi Miller	3 years		
Mary Lou Hodges	3 years		
Jodi Weltin	3 years		
Season Miller	2 years		
NOVEMBER			
Judi Simon	21 years		
Luci Bowlus	20 years		
Mary Zimmerman	18 years		
Lori Green	14 years		
Nancy Grove	12 years		
Randy Company	12 years		
Lori Hampshire	11 years		
Jason Pollick	5 years		



MIS Marti's Megabytes

By Marti Cummings

Most of October was spent working with the State to find out what was wrong with our internet connectivity. Our fiscal people were having a hard time working in New World. So the State put a monitor on our system which took snapshots of our network use. Most of our bandwidth was taken up by Facebook and streaming music, how embarrassing! Facebook is now blocked, and our network connectivity has been much improved.

The State also granted me Remote Desktop Manager! This allows me to help troubleshoot your computers from my office. I have a tool to find your computer on the network and remote into it and take control of your mouse and keyboard. It is very neat and fun to use. I cannot remote into your computer without your permission, so your privacy is still safe. The normal procedure is to be on the phone with the person whose computer needs looked at and talk through the issue over the phone. There are still instances where I need to go to the computer to check other things, but it is such a neat tool.



SCDJFS
 2511 Countryside Drive
 Fremont, OH 43420
 Phone: 419-334-3891
 Fax: 419-332-2156
 E-mail: info@sanduskycountydfs.org



Quote of the Quarter

*“The only place where your
 dream becomes
 impossible is in your
 own thinking.”*
 -- **Robert Schuller**

**PERFECT ATTENDANCE FOR THE
 FOURTH QUARTER 2009**

The following 11 employees used no sick leave during the Fourth Quarter of 2009.

Becky Bohn	Nancy Grove
Luci Bowlus	Nancy Haley
Jerri Carper	Season Miller
Beth Cook	Paul Olds
Michael Fuller	Ana Ortiz
	Dean Ross

CONGRATULATIONS!

By the Numbers.....

462

The number of investigations that Children Services handled in 2009 involving 970 children.

\$12,276,694.53

The amount collected in 2009 for Child Support.

37

The number of customers enrolled in the WIA program from 7-1-09 to the present.

1761

The number of Children Services intakes for the 2009 year.

37

The number of non-custodial parents who were indicted by the Grand Jury for felony non-support.

1157

The number of scanned Food Pantry referrals in 2009

\$9,753,562

The amount of Food Assistance issued in 2009 for Sandusky County residents.

19,763

The number of customers who visited the Job Store in 2009.

520,529

The number of hits on our website in 2009