

Response to Questions on the FY 2008 Advertised Budget Plan

Request By: Supervisor Hudgins

Question: If it is true that the TANF/VIEW enrollment is down, how will this impact the County and will the County be able to draw down additional state dollars? Are there any other sources of revenue?

Response: Data from the Virginia Department of Social Services indicates that state-wide TANF/VIEW caseloads are down by approximately 10 percent through February when compared to the same period last year. However, the increased work participation requirements associated with the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 have resulted in an increase in the number of TANF/VIEW families (i.e. the mandated population) using subsidized child care services. This increase in the number of TANF/VIEW child care cases may be attributable to a number of factors including increases in work hour requirements for all participants and increased work requirements for pregnant women and new mothers. It was this expected increase in TANF/VIEW caseloads that caused the state to redirect funding from Fee System child care for low-income working poor families last year (i.e. the non-mandated population).

Given that the new TANF/VIEW requirements were just implemented in October 2006, it is too early for the state to determine if the current downward trend in caseloads will be sustained. Additionally, some elements of the VIEW program, such as transportation and child care, are very costly, so as more participants engage in work, affiliated costs could rise. As a result, there is no expectation right now that state funding might be freed up and subsequently reallocated to Fee System child care. Should there be a balance in TANF funding, it is unclear how the state would redirect that funding.