



ESS – OPBI 2020 – 2021 Annual Report

Department of Children and Families
Office of Economic Self-Sufficiency
December 21, 2021

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Secretary

Ron DeSantis
Governor

2020-2021 Legislative Annual Report on Food Assistance Program Violations and the Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) System

Pursuant to section (s.) 414.34, Florida Statutes (F.S.), the Department of Children and Families (DCF) is required to submit a report annually summarizing the administrative complaints and disciplinary actions involving the food assistance program (also known as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP) violations in the following areas (sections 1-7). DCF also is required to report on the progress of the development and implementation of the EBT program.

The Economic Self-Sufficiency (ESS) Office of Public Benefits Integrity (OPBI) is responsible for preventing, detecting, and investigating cases of potential public assistance fraud. Pursuant to s. 414.411, F.S., DCF contracts with the Department of Financial Services, Division of Public Assistance Fraud (DPAF), to conduct investigations of suspected public assistance fraud and, if warranted, pursue prosecution of violations through administrative or judicial means. If DPAF does not pursue an investigation, OPBI may select to investigate the case. This report provides a complete view of the volume and disposition of fraud complaints, investigations, and prosecutions.

The following information is correspondingly numbered as it appears in the authorizing legislation and represents activities conducted during state fiscal year (SFY) 2019-20.

1. A total of **62,017** fraud complaints were received by the OPBI Fraud Reward Assessment Team (FRAT), OPBI Benefit Investigations, and DPAF. A total of **15,808** food assistance investigations were completed by OPBI Benefit Investigations and DPAF during SFY 2020-21. The number of complaints and investigations are outlined below:

Complaints:

- OPBI FRAT received 11,039 complaints from the public, DCF employees, and other outside entities.
- OPBI Benefit Investigations received 31,019 complaints generated through data analytics from FRAT and DCF ESS Regional Operations.
- DPAF received 19,959 complaints from FRAT and DCF ESS Regional Operations.

Investigations:

- OPBI Benefit Investigations completed **12,061** investigations and referred **5,491** of those investigations to DPAF for additional investigation.
- DPAF completed **3,747** investigations.

2. DPAF pursued **1,585** criminal prosecutions that produced findings of probable cause.
3. DPAF reported **100** investigations that produced no findings of probable cause.
4. The number of administrative complaints filed by OPBI and DPAF relating to public assistance fraud cases are outlined below:

Source	Administrative Complaints Filed
Office of Public Benefits Integrity	1,721
Division of Public Assistance Fraud	917
Total	2,638

5. The disposition of administrative complaints resolved in SFY 2020-21 are outlined below. Complaints "Awaiting Decision" include complaints that are pending administrative disqualification hearings.

Disposition	Administrative Results
Disqualified	1,291
Not Disqualified	297
Awaiting Decision	1,041
Total	2,629

6. DPAF referred **508** criminal complaints to the various state attorneys under s. 414.39, F.S. The disposition of criminal complaints adjudicated in SFY 2020-21 resulted in the following administrative actions:

Disposition	Administrative Results
Disqualified	201
Not Disqualified	111
Awaiting Decision	3
Total	315

7. **Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT)**
 During SFY 2020-2021, there was no development or implementation of rules governing the electronic benefits transfer program, including any recommendations for statutory changes.