



**Economic Self Sufficiency (ESS) Office of Public Benefits Integrity (OPBI)  
Annual Report  
Fiscal Year 2021-22**

**Department of Children and Families  
Office of Economic Self Sufficiency**

**December 2022**

**Shevaun L. Harris  
Secretary**

**Ron DeSantis  
Governor**

## The 2021-2022 Legislative Annual Report on Food Assistance Program Violations and the Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) System

Pursuant to section 414.34, Florida Statutes (F.S.), the Department of Children and Families (Department) 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 listed below in sections 1-7. The Department is also required to report on the development and implementation progress 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 section 414.411, F.S., the Department 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 take the case for investigation. 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 Fiscal Year (FY) 2021-2022.

1. A total of **51,785** fraud complaints were received by OPBI and DPAF, and a total of **11,811** food assistance investigations were completed by OPBI Benefit Investigations and DPAF during FY 2021-2022.
2. Criminal prosecutions are pursued by DPAF and reported **1,394** investigations that produced findings of probable cause.<sup>1</sup>
3. DPAF reported **99** 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	2,350
Division of Public Assistance Fraud	785
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,135</b>

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<sup>1</sup> For data elements 2 and 3, pursuant to Florida Statutes, the Department is reporting data specific to DPAF's findings of probable cause.

5. The disposition of administrative complaints resolved in FY 2021-2022 are outlined below. Complaints “Awaiting Decision” include those pending administrative disqualification hearings.

<b>Disposition</b>	<b>Administrative Results</b>
Disqualified	1,469
Not Disqualified	192
Awaiting Decision	1,323
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,984</b>

6. DPAF handles criminal prosecutions, and referred **640** criminal complaints to the various state attorneys under section 414.39, F.S. The disposition of criminal complaints adjudicated in FY 2021-2022 resulted in the following administrative actions:

<b>Disposition</b>	<b>Administrative Results</b>
Disqualified	240
Not Disqualified	128
Awaiting Decision	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>372</b>

7. Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT)

During FY 2021-2022, there were no recommendations for statutory changes, and no development or implementation of rules governing the electronic benefits transfer program.