



**Economic Self Sufficiency
Office of Public Benefits Integrity Annual Report**

Department of Children and Families
Office of Economic Self Sufficiency
January 1, 2024

Shevaun L. Harris
Secretary

Ron DeSantis
Governor

The 2022-2023 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 Florida 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 is also required to report on the progress of the development and implementation of rules governing 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., 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 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 represent activities conducted during Fiscal Year (FY) 2022-2023.

1. A total of **49,358** fraud complaints were received by the OPBI Fraud Reward Assessment Team (FRAT)¹, OPBI Benefit Investigations, and DPAF. The number of complaints are outlined below:

Complaints:

- OPBI FRAT received 12,349 complaints from the public, DCF employees, and other outside entities.
- OPBI Benefit Investigations received 22,855 complaints from FRAT, DCF ESS Regional Operations, and generated by data analytics.
- DPAF received 14,154 complaints from FRAT and DCF ESS Regional Operations.

¹ The OPBI FRAT receives, evaluates, and refers complaints of public assistance fraud to OPBI Benefit Investigations and DPAF. The number of complaints for OPBI Benefit Investigations and DPAF include complaints that were referred from FRAT. The investigations of complaints were conducted by OPBI Benefit Investigations and/or DPAF as appropriate.

A total of **7,391** food assistance investigations were completed by OPBI Benefit Investigations and DPAF during FY 2022-2023. The number of investigations are outlined below:

Investigations:

- OPBI Benefit Investigations completed 6,105 investigations and referred 3,554 of those investigations to DPAF for additional investigation.
 - DPAF completed 1,286 investigations.
2. Criminal prosecutions are pursued by DPAF who reported **1,207** investigations that produced findings of probable cause.²
 3. DPAF reported **79** 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	587
Division of Public Assistance Fraud	741
Total	1,328

5. The disposition of administrative complaints resolved in FY 2022-2023 are outlined below. Complaints “Awaiting Decision” include those pending administrative disqualification hearings³.

Disposition	Administrative Results
Disqualified	963
Not Disqualified	110
Awaiting Decision	304
Total	1,377

6. DPAF handles criminal prosecutions and referred **990** criminal complaints to the various state attorneys under section 414.39, F.S. The disposition of criminal complaints adjudicated in FY 2022-2023 resulted in the following administrative actions:

² For data elements 2 and 3, pursuant to Florida Statute, DCF is reporting data specific to DPAF’s findings of probable cause.

³ For data elements 4 and 5, the total amount of administrative complaints filed, and the total amount of administrative complaints resolved may differ based on the amount of time it takes to resolve an administrative complaint.

Disposition	Administrative Results
Disqualified	318
Not Disqualified	316
Awaiting Decision	0
Total	634

7. Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT)

During FY 2022-2023, there were no rules developed or implemented governing the electronic benefits transfer program, nor were there any recommendations for statutory changes.

NOTICE OF FILING

Reporting Agency:	Department of Children and Families
Recipient Agency:	Governor Speaker of the House of Representatives President of the Senate
Subject:	Economic Self Sufficiency Office of Public Benefits Integrity Annual Report FY 2022-2023
Report Due Date:	January 1, 2024
Statutory Requirement:	s. 414.34, F.S.
Abstract:	<p>A legislatively mandated report must be submitted to the Governor and Legislature, and Department of Law Enforcement by January 1 each year.</p> <p>The 2022-23 report addresses requirements in Section 39.524, F.S. as follows:</p> <p>. In addition to any other information the Legislature may require, the report must include statistics and relevant information detailing:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">(1) The number of complaints received and investigated.(2) The number of findings of probable cause made.(3) The number of findings of no probable cause made.(4) The number of administrative complaints filed.(5) The disposition of all administrative complaints.(6) The number of criminal complaints brought under s. 414.39, and their disposition.(7) The status of the development and implementation of rules governing the electronic <p>Copies of this report may be obtained by contacting: Department of Children and Families 2415 North Monroe Street, Suite 400 Tallahassee, Florida 32303 Phone: 850-487-1111</p> <p>Lawful recipients will not be charged for copies. Charges for copies requested by others will conform to requirements of Department of Children and Families CFOP 15-9, Requests for Public Records.</p>

INSTRUCTIONS:

This format is to be used to provide information on the statute requiring the report, and is to be submitted with the report.

Column 1 (Report Title) should include the title of the report being submitted, e.g., Domestic Violence Report.

Column 2 (Statutory Reference) should include the statute requiring the specific report, e.g., s. 39.904, F.S.

Column 3 (Specifications) should list any requirements the law specifies should be included in the report, e.g., (1) The incidence of domestic violence in this state; (2) Identification of areas of the state where domestic violence is of significant proportions....., etc.