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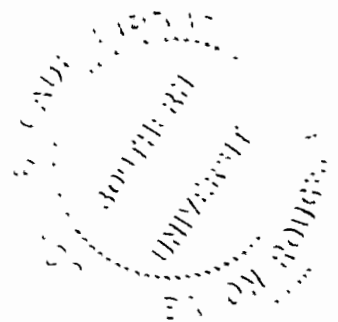
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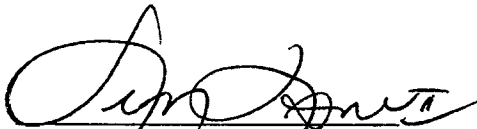
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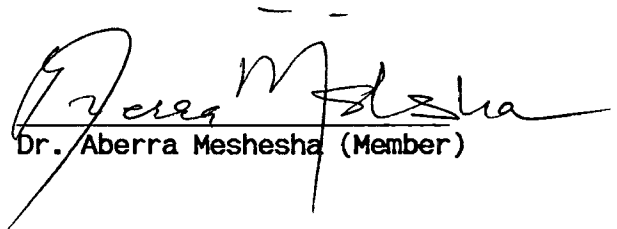
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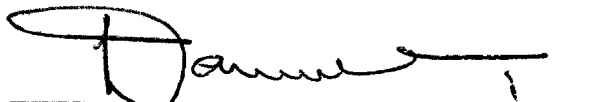
Mary Albert Williams

has been approved by the Examining Committee for the research
requirement for Master of Public Administration
In the Department of Public Administration on the 18th day of November,

1993


Leon Tarver, II (Advisor)


Dr. Aberra Meshesha (Member)


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The Reorganization of Orleans Region I of
The Louisiana Office of Family Support

An Abstract of a Case Management Project

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department of Public Administration
School of Public Policy and Urban Affairs

Southern University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Public Administration

by

Mary Albert Williams

November, 1993

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this case management project is to examine the reorganization of a large metropolitan family support office of the Louisiana Department of Human Services. The case study focuses on the creation of a new district office, in the New Orleans area, in response to this reorganization initiative. This case study serves as the basis for discussion of the constraints and opportunities forced by a state agency regarding the internal and external pressures to provide more efficient and effective service delivery.

JOHN P. CADEMIER

This case study would not have been possible without the input and cooperation of such key persons in the Office of Family Support as Don Moore, Director of Field Operations for the Office of Family Support and co-author of the reorganization plan, not only supplied most of the information needed for my research, but willingly took time out of his busy schedule to avail himself to me as needed. He has been very supportive of my research efforts; for that I thank him very much.

Emily Thornton, Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Office of Family Support, graciously agreed to impart to me knowledge she had on the reorganization effort.

Cathy McCraine, Secretary to Don Moore, exemplified the ultimate in patience. Despite her busy schedule, she always greeted me with a smile and a willingness to cooperate.

Mary Joseph, former Administrator of Orleans Parish in Region I; now Regional Manager of Orleans Region IX. This lady is the co-author of the reorganization plan. I had the pleasure of interviewing her and gained insight into the "special concerns" of that region. She is a very knowledgeable lady. She provided valuable information for this case study.

Laura Pease, Assistant Director of Project Independence and my supervisor, (the best) gladly assisted, without hesitation, in granting me time to compile information for my case study.

I would like to acknowledge thanks to the instructors of the Public Administration Department at Southern University. This department contains some of the most brilliant minds employed at the university. I would recommend this department to anyone wishing to increase their knowledge of Public Administration.

DEDICATION

"The journey of a thousand miles starts with a single step."

CHINESE PROVERB

I thank God for imparting to me the wisdom I needed to take that first ~~step~~. My true potential lay dormant until I affirmed possession of this ~~vision~~. I began to believe I have the potential to reach my goal.

My journey does not end with the accomplishment of this goal; it ~~invariably~~ stops to pause and give thanks to God and the numerous people he ~~has~~ placed in my path to assist me in this journey.

Most importantly, this project is dedicated to my daughter, Aeryn ~~Michelle~~ Williams, the principal object of my affection and motivation who, in ~~1981~~, was eight years old when I embarked on my studies. I feel that she has ~~substantially~~ bequeathed to me two years of not having my undivided attention. ~~She~~ looks forward to the end of my studies in this program more than I do.

This project is also dedicated to my parents Lloyd, Sr. and Mercedes ~~Albert~~, my sister Charlotte Colar, her husband Bo and their two daughters ~~Angela~~ and Adrienne. Without hesitation, they agreed to become my daughter's ~~surrogate~~ parents; this allowed me to attend classes without too much guilt. ~~During my two~~ years of studies, where I fell short as a parent, they picked up ~~in so many~~ ways.

To my ~~many~~ colleagues who, during the beginning phase of my studies when ~~my confidence~~ waned, gave me the encouragement to go on.

Because of these people, my journey can now continue...

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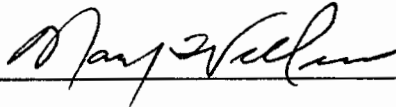
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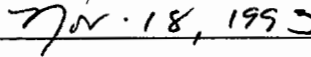


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The Reorganization of Orleans Region 1 of
The Louisiana Office of Family Support

I. Introduction

The Orleans Region I of the Office of Family Support, Department of Social Services, was reorganized in 1991 due to an increased demand made on its human and programmatic services brought on by surging unemployment, a large outmigration of Louisiana's population and an overall decline of the State's economic condition. Louisiana's population climbed significantly during the early 1980s, but this growth was largely offset by outmigration spurred by the state's economic downturn in the second half of the decade. The majority (55.9%) of household moves involving Louisiana were outbound. The average household size in Louisiana shrank from 2.91 persons per unit in 1980 to 2.74 in 1990. Between 1980 and 1990 Louisiana had a smaller elderly population (aged 65 and over) and a larger young population (people 17 years old or younger). As a result, Louisiana experienced a net population growth of only .3% between 1980 and 1990. In contrast, the average change in all other state populations during that same time period was a 9.8% increase.¹

During the early 80s, the combined effects of a stagnant national economy and a depressed petroleum industry caused employment to fall about 2.1% throughout the State. The oil and gas industry, where employment once maintained a healthy growth, saw a very meager percentage increase in employment. Towards the mid 1980s, Louisiana's unemployment rate continued to be higher than the national average. An analysis of the State's 1983 economy by sector and by parish showed an economy that was stagnating in some of the most important sectors, declining in the all important oil and gas industry and being driven largely by such activities as retailing and services. The economy buckled in 1983. There was nearly total stagnation of the economy in 1984. Real income from important sectors of the Louisiana economy such as construction, mining and manufacturing declined drastically in 1985. By 1988, Louisiana showed a slow, grudging improvement of the economy. The State's unemployment rate, while still the highest in the nation, started to improve. The manufacturing sector, especially the petro-chemical industry, started to grow again. Towards the end of 1988, oil prices were firming up.

This case was written by Mary Albert Williams under the supervision of Professor Leon Tarver, II of the Department of Public Administration, School of Public Policy and Urban Affairs. It is intended to serve as a basis for class discussion, not to illustrate either effective or ineffective handling of a managerial situation. Copyright c 1993 by the Southern University Board of Supervisors, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

¹ The Office of Planning and Budget, State of Louisiana: State of the State 1993, p. 51.

II. Background

The Louisiana Department of Public Welfare was established in 1936 as the initial single state agency to administer the program of Public Assistance. The specific duties of the Department of Public Welfare includes:

- . administering all forms of public assistance, particularly direct money payments to eligible individuals.
- . organizing and supervising parish welfare departments to act as agents of the state for all welfare activities in the parish.
- . administering federal welfare funds granted to the State in compliance with federal standards.
- . administering and supervising all public child welfare activities.
- . contracting with individuals to provide temporary or long term foster care.
- . licensing and supervising agencies, institutions, and individuals caring for children.

The Louisiana Department of Public Welfare has been administered through various state structures since 1936 to now. Act 253 of 1972 (LSA - R. S. 42: 15 -42: 1767) consolidated the Louisiana Department of Public Welfare under the Louisiana Health and Social and Rehabilitative Services Administration, designating this Administration as the single state agency authorized to receive and expend federal funds awarded or allocated to the State of Louisiana for carrying out the purposes of any federal law concerning the health, public welfare and hospitals of the state.

Under the provision of this act, the Louisiana Department of Public Welfare became the Division of Family Services of the Louisiana Health and Social and Rehabilitative Services Administration. Since that time, the Louisiana Health and Social and Rehabilitative Services Administration has become the Louisiana Department of Health and Human Resources from 1975- 1987, to the current Louisiana Department of Social Services and the Division of Family Services is now the Office of Family Support.

III. Program Administration

The Department of Social Services (DSS) is responsible for the development and provision of social services, improvement of social conditions for the citizens of Louisiana and the rehabilitation of handicapped persons for employment. In general, the purpose of DSS is to provide high quality

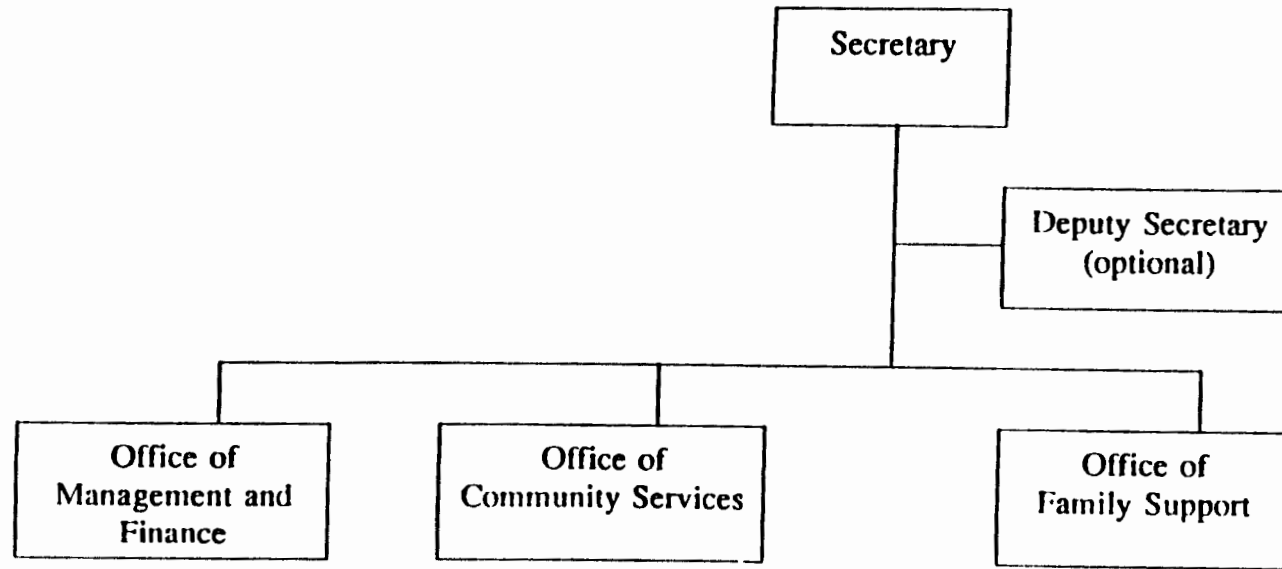
To achieve its goal, the Department consists of the Executive Office of the Secretary, Office of Management and Finance and two major operating offices, the Office of Community Services and the Office of Family Support. Under the direction of the Secretary, the offices perform all of the responsibilities assigned to the Department (DSS organizational chart found on page 4, Exhibit 1). Each of these Offices has specific functions to perform in concert with the other Offices in order to address the mission of DSS. This case study will focus on one of the two major operating offices, the Office of Family Support.

The Office of Family Support (OFS) in the Department of Social Services is the single state agency responsible for the planning, development, implementation and administration of all cash assistance programs (OFS organizational chart found on page 5, Exhibit 2). The purpose of OFS is to provide financial and medical assistance to meet the basic needs of individuals and families who are unable to achieve self-support because of physical, mental or social handicaps. The Assistant Secretary of the Office of Family Support is the executive head of the Office of Family Support and is responsible to the Secretary and or Deputy Secretary of the Department of Social Services for the administration of the Agency, its programs, and for the accomplishment of the basic goals and objectives of the Office of Family Support which are:

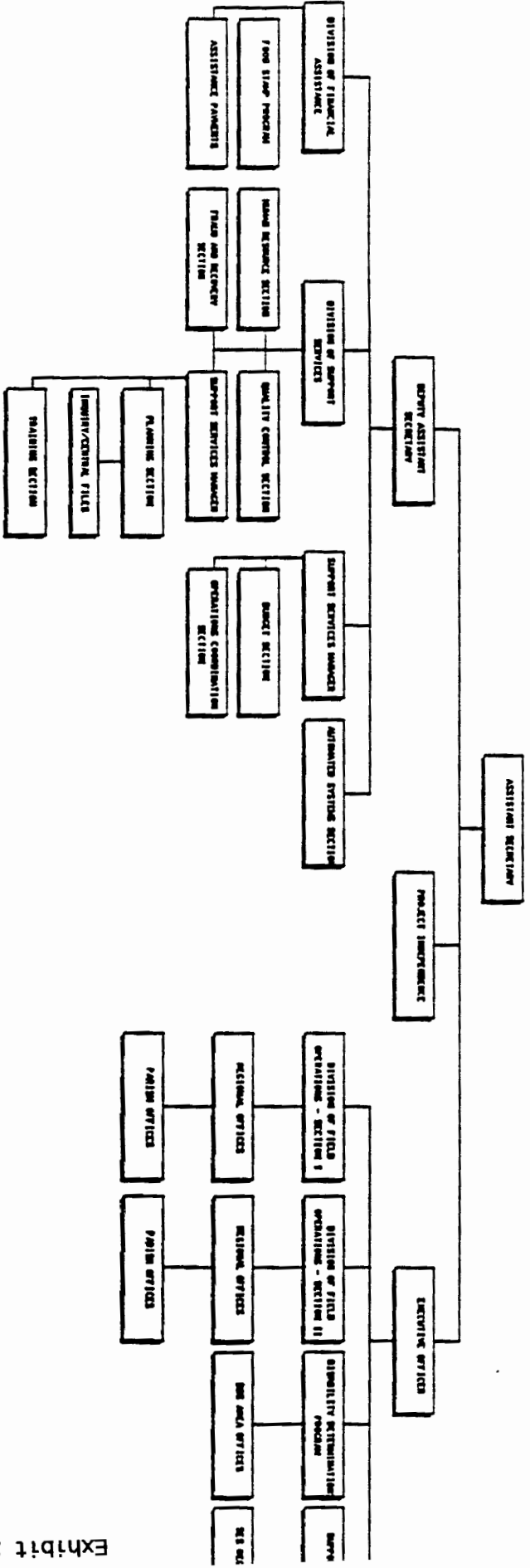
- . To administer the office's five major programs, which include: Assistance Payments, Food Stamps, Child Support Enforcement, Disability Determinations, and Project Independence, in accordance with applicable federal rules and regulations and state laws.
- . To increase the ability of low-income individuals and families, who are unable to provide fully for themselves to their families through employment or their own resources, to obtain the basic necessities of life.
- . To help families with children receiving aid obtain the education, training, and employment that will help avoid long-term welfare dependence.
- . To adopt methods of administration designed to assure that services are provided in a sympathetic and dignified manner.
- . To ensure the proper management of resources available for the support of individuals and families in need of financial assistance.
- . To coordinate with and supplement other state and community agency's efforts toward reducing dependency and promoting self-sufficiency.

To accomplish these goals, the Office of Family Support is organized ~~to~~ four major divisions. Each Division is administered by a Division Director who is supervised by either the Deputy Assistant Secretary, or the Assistant Secretary. The Division responsible for the operations of all OFS ~~programs~~ is the Division of Field Operations.

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES



DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
OFFICE OF FAMILY SUPPORT



Proposed
August 3, 1982
Exhibit 2

UNIVERSITY MICROFILMS
SERIALS ACQUISITION
300 N ZEEB RD
ANN ARBOR MI 48106

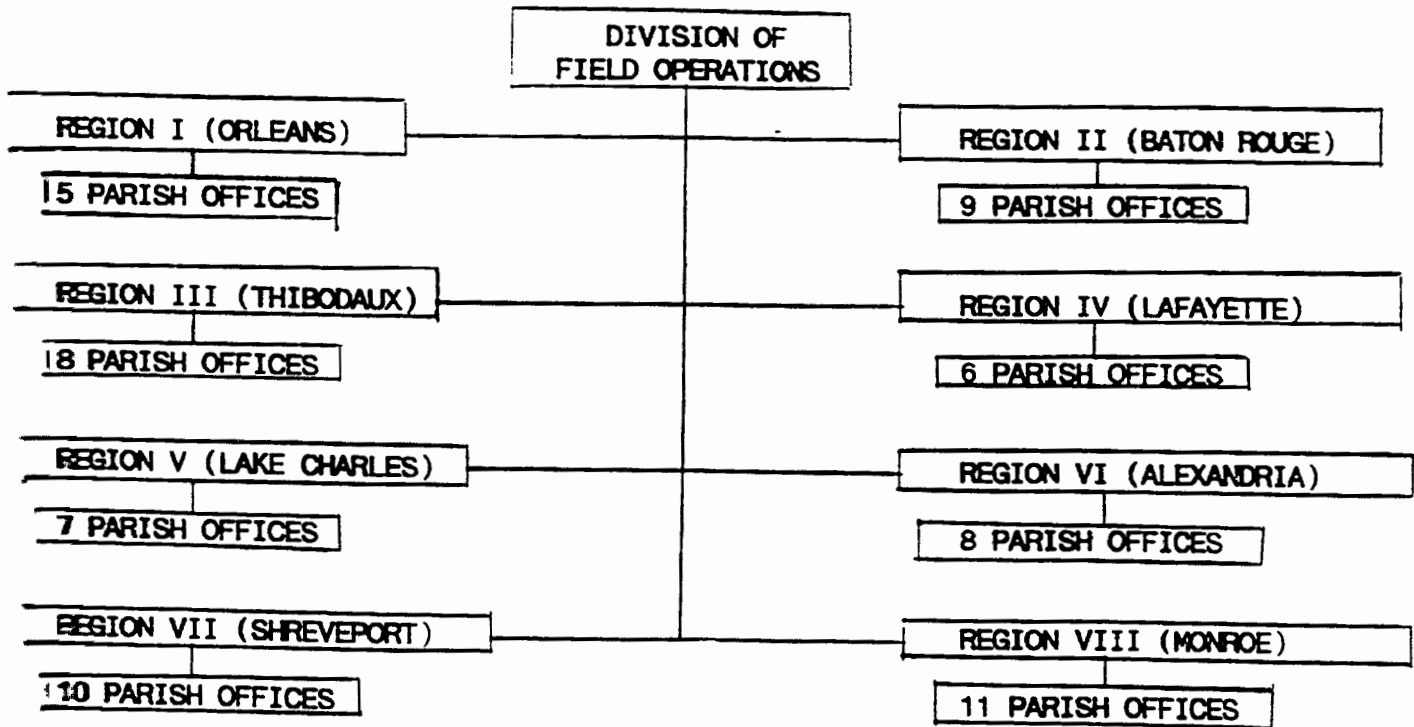
Through a network of regional and parish offices, the Director of Field Operations, Don Moore, manages material and staff to meet the goals of each program; acquires office space and material as needed; hires staff; monitors field activities and develops administrative and operational plans and procedures to ensure that implementation and operations of all program activities are in compliance with the objective of the Office of Family Support, the Department of Social Services and federal and state laws and regulations.

Regional Offices

Prior to reorganization, the Office of Family Support was comprised of eight Regional Offices and sixty four parishes around the state. The Regional Offices, on a smaller level, are sub divisions of Field Operations and their personnel represent all of the operating divisions of OFS. Each Regional Office is administered by a Regional Manager. The supervision of the Regional Manager is the responsibility of Don Moore, Director of Field Operations. Each Regional Manager is responsible for overseeing the administrative functions of all parish offices assigned to their region.

Parish Offices

These offices are responsible for administering the programs offered by the Office of Family Support. The Parish Offices are headed by a Parish Administrator who is supervised by the Regional Manager for that parish. Following is an organizational chart for the Division of Field Operations, prior to reorganization:



15/11/1978

... of the Office of Family Support are administered
by the eight Regional Offices:

- . Assistance Payments
- . Food Stamp Program
- . Child Support Enforcement Program
- . Disability Determinations Program
- . Project Independence

Of these programs, this case study will focus on the Food Stamp Program and the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) Program, which is incorporated in the Assistance Payment Program, because of their impact on the reorganization issue.

Aid to Families with Dependent Children Program

The Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) Program is by far the largest direct payment program administered by Assistance Payments in terms of the number of recipients, total grant expenditures and staff. To illustrate:

There were 62,035 AFDC active cases in June, 1982.
In January 1990 were 94,255 active AFDC cases.
By June 1992, there were 91,691 active AFDC cases.

The total AFDC benefits paid out in Louisiana in State Fiscal Year 1988-1989 was \$185 million. \$55 million represented State dollars and \$130 million represented federal dollars.

In State Fiscal Year 1989-1990, \$187 million was paid out in Louisiana for AFDC benefits. \$51 million represented State dollars and \$136 million represented federal dollars.

In State Fiscal Year 1991-1992, again \$185 million was paid out in Louisiana for AFDC benefits with \$46 million representing State dollars and \$139 million representing federal dollars.

Source: The Facts About Welfare and Food Stamps in Louisiana: Office of Family Support - July, 1991.

the Office of Family Support, through the Assistance Payments Program, employs Eligibility Determinations Examiners who are responsible for processing AFDC applications. These Examiners comprise approximately 70% of the total staff housed in the local parish offices.

Local Eligibility staff interview clients on initial application, process the application, inform the applicant of services available, and notify the applicant of eligibility. Extensive documentation and verification of an applicant's circumstances are required to determine eligibility. The local Eligibility staff must also recertify or redetermine eligibility every three months, six months, or two years depending on the client's circumstances, refer clients to other agencies for services and input information into the State's Social Services Information System.

Food Stamp Program

The Food Stamp Program, established by Congress in 1964 and superseded by the Food Stamp Act of 1977, has the goals of promoting the general welfare and safeguarding the health and well-being of the population by raising levels of nutrition among low income households. Food Stamp benefits are paid entirely with Federal dollars. The total benefits paid out in Louisiana in State Fiscal Year 1990-1991 were \$584,585,073. For that same fiscal year, the total statewide food stamp caseload equaled 92,532. In State Fiscal Year 1991-1992, total benefits paid were \$640,938,637. For that same fiscal year, the total statewide food stamp caseload equaled 89,723.

Program operations are shared between the State and local governments pursuant to federal law. The State is responsible for certifying or determining eligibility, and the local governments are responsible for issuance of the stamps.

For administrative purposes, the State agency has divided eligibility into two classifications - Public Assistance (PA) and Non Public Assistance (NPA). The first group of clients is composed of Assistance Payments recipients, and the other consist of applicants who meet Food Stamp, but not Assistance Payments, income criteria. Accordingly, eligibility certification for PA and NPA households is performed by the same Assistance Payments staff that determines eligibility for the AFDC program.

Eligibility Determinations Examiners in the parish offices are responsible for the determination of eligibility and the certification of eligible households for food stamps. Extensive documentation and verification of an applicant's circumstances are required to determine eligibility.

Aid to Families with Dependent Children and Food Stamp statistics for each Region are listed below. These statistics reflect each Region's distribution of AFDC cases and Food Stamp households prior to reorganization:

Source: The Facts About Welfare and Food Stamps in Louisiana: OFS-JULY, 1990

<u>PARISH</u>	<u>#AFDC CASES</u>	<u># FOOD STAMP HOUSEHOLDS SERVED</u>
Orleans	22,699	51,635
Jefferson	6,174	15,167
Plaquemines	572	1,242
St. Tammany	1,128	4,729
St. Bernard	723	2,488

REGION 2 - BATON ROUGE

East Baton Rouge	7,571	18,733
East Feliciana	520	1,416
Livingston	673	2,882
St. Helena	234	784
Tangipahoa	2,569	7,308
West Baton Rouge	439	1,289
Pointe Coupee	706	2,100
West Feliciana	183	530
Washington	1,102	3,835

REGION 3 - THIBODAUX

Ascension	1,269	3,375
Assumption	536	1,432
Iberville	996	2,557
Lafourche	1,503	3,858
St. Charles	663	1,695
St. James	590	1,463
St. John	776	2,057
Terrebonne	1,571	5,150

REGION 4 - LAFAYETTE

<u>PARISH</u>	<u>#AFDC CASES</u>	<u># FOOD STAMP HOUSEHOLDS SERVED</u>
Iberia	1,325	4,515
Lafayette	1,975	6,581
St. Landry	2,775	8,235
St. Martin	637	2,337
Vermillion	792	2,730
St. Mary	1,337	4,134

Figures represent AFDC and Food Stamp statistics for 1988.

REGION 5 - LAKE CHARLES

Acadia	1,272	4,319
Allen	455	1,926
Bureauard	348	1,234
Calcasieu	2,614	8,346
Cameron	76	288
Evangeline	1,058	3,372
Jefferson Davis	498	1,901

REGION 6 - ALEXANDRIA

Avoyelles	1,127	4,134
Catahoula	269	1,014
Concordia	655	1,722
Grant	338	1,272
La Salle	154	654
Vernon	455	2,098
Rapides	2,220	7,299
Winn	439	1,495

REGION 7 - SHREVEPORT

<u>PARISH</u>	<u>#AFDC CASES</u>	<u>#FOOD STAMP HOUSEHOLDS SERVED</u>
Bienville	354	1,435
Bossier	939	3,441
Caddo	5,592	17,012
Claiborne	389	1,474
De Soto	634	2,528
Lincoln	695	1,942
Red River	267	928
Webster	676	2,530
Natchitoches	1,003	3,182
Sabine	434	1,606

REGION 8 - MONROE

Caldwell	183	685
East Carroll	615	1,520
Franklin	554	1,849
Jackson	306	948
Madison	570	1,463
Morehouse	1,064	2,954
Ouachita	2,821	7,353
Richland	559	1,736
Tensas	335	933
Union	332	1,166
West Carroll	201	945

Figures represent AFDC and Food Stamp statistics for 1988.

In addition to the programs previously mentioned, there is a Special Services unit at the State level assigned the responsibility of performing certain activities common to some or all of the major program units. These activities include fraud detection, appeals, quality control, case audit, training, recovery, and public information.

Quality Control activities are federally required for certain major programs such as Assistance Payments and Food Stamps. A sample of cases statewide are reviewed by Quality Control staff to ensure accurate eligibility determination and application of program policies and procedures. Based upon the findings, recommendations are made and corrective action plans developed. This activity not only satisfies federal reporting requirements but also provides valuable management information to State, Regional and Local Administrative and Supervisory Staff.

V. Cause for Reorganization

The decade of the 80s was characterized by an onslaught of corrective action measures for the Office of Family Support's Food Stamp and AFDC Programs. Both programs were charged by the federal government with failing to comply with their respective federal mandates, therefore they had to implement corrective action measures to regain compliance status.

For the AFDC Program, the top four elements of error(misspent dollars):

<u>Element</u>	<u># Agency Error</u>	<u># Client Error</u>
Earned Income	17	34
Resources	5	4
RSDI Benefits	7	2
Household Composition	3	5

FACT: These top four elements of error accounted for 77% of misspent dollars in the program.

For the Food Stamp Program, the top five elements of error(misspent dollars)

<u>Element</u>	<u>Agency Error</u>	<u>Client Error</u>	<u>% of Pmt. Error Rt.</u>
Wages & Salaries	24.5%	75.5%	51.1%
Household Composition	33.9%	66.1%	15.8%
Resources	23.5%	76.5%	7.6%
Shelter Deduction	55.9%	44.1%	3.5%
RSDI	38.5%	11.5%	3.4%

FACT: These errors accounted for 81% of misspent dollars in the program.

Source: Office of Family Support Corrective Action Plan 1985 - 1990.

...state agency's quality control payment error rate exceeds federally established tolerance levels (the payment tolerance level for any fiscal year shall be one percentage point added to the lowest National performance measure ever announced up to and including such fiscal year) the federal agency responsible for the administration of the program can establish a claim against the state agency responsible for local administering the program.

Sanctions

For any year in which a state agency's payment error rate exceeds the payment-error tolerance level, the state agency shall pay or have its share of administrative costs reduced by an amount equal to the difference between its payment error rate less such tolerance level as a quantity, multiplied by the total value of the allotments issued in the fiscal year by that State agency.

The AFDC Program fared much better in avoiding monetary sanctions than the Food Stamp program. On at least four occasions, Louisiana was assessed a monetary sanction for exceeding the established Food Stamp error tolerance level:

<u>FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR</u>	<u>SANCTIONED AMOUNT</u>
1986	\$4,989,715
1989	\$4,941,785
1990	\$2,087,800
1991	\$2,513,639

The existence of the sanctions raised serious questions about the orientation and training programs of the Department for its employees who perform the paperwork functions and their ability to work with recipients in correctly discharging their responsibilities. It also raised questions about providing timely services to the client and the ability of the agency to meet the needs of the client. Results of the sanctions could infer that the client population are not receiving services as mandated by federal regulations.

The office of Family Support had initiated numerous measures during the past years to address its error rates in both the Food Stamp and AFDC Programs. Recognizing that causal factors of errors in both programs were primarily the result of clients failure to properly report information and the agency's failure to take indicated case actions, the primary focus in corrective action planning had been on more effective utilization of resources and staff and effective workload management at the Parish level; these ideas were noteworthy, however, something else had to be developed in addition to the current corrective measures because the State continued to have sanctions imposed on its Food Stamp Program.

Figures provided by Burke Guillory, Director of the Food Stamp Program for the Office of Family Support.

The situation with the State's error rate precipitated a need for a serious look at the existing organizational makeup of the Office of Family Support. Methods had to be developed that would once again bring the State in compliance with federal mandates for its AFDC and Food Stamp Programs.

To maximize the effectiveness of corrective action measures, it would be imperative to identify parishes or regions that could significantly have a negative impact on the State's error rate. Once this identification was made, the major task would be to take necessary action to reduce the potential negative impact the parish or region's error rate could have on the State's error rate. Orleans Region I, for example, accounted for 31.6% of the total Statewide Food Stamp caseload and could, therefore, have more of an impact on the State Food Stamp Program's error rate than any other region.

Don Moore, Director of Field Operations, considered the breakup of Orleans Region I essential to the successful outcome of corrective action measures to lower the state's error rate and improve on timeliness of applications in all programs. He realized that the Orleans Parish Office was unique to that of the other parishes. Orleans Parish maintained the highest caseload in the state, it had the highest turnover of employees, the largest filer room in the state, and insufficient parking for its staff; Orleans Parish had special concerns that other parishes have never experienced.

It was the largest welfare operations in the nation housed in one building. The building has 10 stories offering 114,640 square footage for its employees. The file room alone took up 1.5 floors of the building. Locating case records was a major issue. Orleans Parish alone comprised 38% of all AFDC cases in Region I, 48% of all Food Stamp households served in Region I, and 59% of all staff in Region I. Orleans Parish had approximately 25% of the total workload of the entire Office of Family Support, therefore, problems with the region's case error rate and untimely applications significantly impacted statewide statistics.

The idea of reorganizing Orleans Region I was presented to the Howard Prejean, the Assistant Secretary. In the interim, Mary Joseph, Orleans Parish Administrator, and Don Moore prepared a proposal outlining why Orleans Region I should be reorganized, how the reorganization should be effectuated, and how reorganization could improve on efficiency and economy of operations. Don Moore and Mary Joseph came up with the following proposal:

VI. Why Reorganize Orleans Region I?

The "Main" Orleans Regional Office of Family Support has been housed at its present location, 2601 Tulane Avenue, since 1972. In 1972, the facility accommodated AFDC, Food Stamps, Child Welfare, and Client Services Programs. The building, at that time, was adequate. It could accommodate staff and client flow as well as handle the varied requirements to fulfill requests for services. The facility today has become increasingly inadequate in staff and client service delivery due to the proliferation of programs since 1972 and the escalating demands for services. The total number of staff for Region I are 579, with 365 housed in Orleans Parish; 280 of the total employees represent Eligibility and Food Stamp worker.

Agency. The office currently maintains a caseload of 96,520 cases. the office processes an average of 1,126 AFDC applications, 3,077 Food Stamp applications, 3,830 AFDC redetermination for eligibility and 7,615 Food Stamp redetermination per month. In addition, the office processes request for Medically Needy, Champ and Long Term Care programs, medical transportation, medical equipment and supply services for medicaid eligibles. October, 1990 marked the advent of the Project Independence Program.

On a daily basis the building must accommodate an average of 1,200 persons seeking direct services. This figure gets as high as 1,600 to 1,800 per day during peak periods of the work month. It is estimated that approximately 50% of the clients served are accompanied by a family member, friend or children when seeking services. As a result of the agency's expansion of services and programs, there are several areas of major concern with regard to the constraints of current space. The proposed division of the Parish will alleviate the current problems of safety hazards, staff and client discomfort, and special impediments to the efficient delivery of services.

VII. PROBLEM AREAS

Insufficient and Inadequate Waiting Room Space

There are two main waiting room areas located on the first floor. This includes the general lobby and elevator area. This area is often extremely overcrowded, allowing only limited walking space and seating. The area has a seating capacity of 150 persons, however, at times as many as 300 or more are crammed into this area. This poses a serious safety problem for the office as a whole. Persons served on the first floor include the general public who may be coming to the office for a meeting or to make general inquiry, applications for assistance, certified recipients and persons utilizing the services of the Child Support office, housed on the 5th floor.

Applicants for Public Assistance are directed to the 3rd floor of the building for services. this floor was originally designed to handle administrative offices, but several years ago its use was redirected to serve the public. This floor handles as many as 500 persons per day. The seating capacity on this floor in various waiting ares is 150 persons. Due to the client flow, this area is also often overcrowded which poses a real safety hazard to all concerned.

Inadequate Client Interviewing Space

Many areas used for client interviews do not meet confidential standards. These makeshift areas were established in an effort to provide eligibility workers and clients the opportunity to discuss the client's service needs. This problem is so serious that during peak periods of the work month, we often utilize the auditorium, lunch room and the 2nd floor sun porch areas for interviewing.

Inadequate NUMBER OF Elevators

The building has three elevators which must be utilized to move staff, Public Assistance clients, and visitors to the office. They are also used to haul freight. The maximum capacity for each elevator is 3,000 pounds or approximately 20 persons. The elevators are often not operational due to age. It is normal on any given day to have at least one non-functioning elevator. This requires several days to repair. The problem results in lost work time for staff as they have to wait as long as 15 minutes to get an elevator. This is irritating to the public, it delays service delivery and causes staff and clients to be delayed with appointments.

While many staff members utilize the stairway to move between floors, this is not always feasible to some. Due to various health problems and handicapping conditions, some individuals have no alternative. They must use the elevator. Freight deliveries often require the designation of one elevator for movement of the supplies to the necessary storage areas. Again, because of the size and volume, some deliveries tie up an elevator for at least 2 hours. Likewise, the elevators are our only mechanism to move refuse to be discarded from the building. Often staff and clients must ride the elevators with the garbage and compete with janitorial services for elevator space.

Inadequate Seating Arrangements For Eligibility and Project Independence Staff

The seating design for staff is that of a cubicle configuration. The allotted space in this configuration is approximately 75 square feet. This space allocation does not allow for many staff conveniences such as file cabinets nearby or desk top computer terminals.

Inadequate Parking

The Tulane Building has an attached garage with 277 parking spaces and a small adjoining lot that accommodates 10 vehicles. The parking lots serve only staff which exceeds 600 persons. Because the Tulane Building is located in a business area, it is extremely difficult for staff to locate street parking. There are no commercial parking lots nearby.

Impaired Delivery of Services

In addition to removing the physical barriers associated with service delivery in the Tulane Building, consideration must be given to the efficiency of delivery and public need for services provided.

VIII. Plan of Action

The plan that Don Moore and Mary Joseph proposed would render Orleans Parish in line for consideration as a Region onto itself. It would rename Region I the Southeast Region and name the newly created Region IX The Orleans

Region I Southeast

East Jefferson Parish
West Jefferson Parish
Plaquemines Parish
St. Tammany Parish
St. Bernard Parish

Region IX Orleans

Uptown District
Midtown District
Algiers District
Downtown District
Gentilly District

The Uptown District will have 31.75% of the AFDC and Food Stamp workload; this equates to a total of 30,646 cases. The Midtown District would have 27.15% of the AFDC and Food Stamp workload which equates to 26,205 cases. The Algiers District would have 8.77% of the AFDC and Food Stamp workload, equivalent to 8,464 cases. The Downtown District would have 16.46% of the AFDC and Food Stamp caseload which is equates to 15,891 cases; and the Gentilly District would have 15.87% of the AFDC and Food Stamp cases which equals 15,314 cases.

The new plan envisions a New Orleans Regional Office for the parish of Orleans, in addition to the five District Offices, to be configured differently than the other Regional Offices. The Orleans Regional Office will house central personnel services, central supply, and closed case files. The new reorganization plan would provide solutions to the existing problem areas in the following way:

Insufficient and Inadequate Waiting room Space

The client population will be restricted in each District Office based on the geographic location of the District Office. This will allow the District Office to allocate adequate waiting room space to accommodate its prospective clientele. This plan should adequately address the safety problem, the problem of security and staff and client discomfort.

Inadequate Client Interviewing Space

Each District Office will limit its clientele to a specific geographic location. The client population for each office can therefore be anticipated and planned for when allotting square footage for interviewing space.

Inadequate Number of Elevators

Existing problems with limited elevator space in the Tulane Office revealed that an inadequate number of elevators in a building can result in lost work time for staff and impaired delivery of service to clients. This knowledge allows for better planning to accommodate the need of clients and staff when bidding for office space.

The Tulane Office housed over 520 plus staff in one building. Experience has shown that when you exceed 150 to 160 positions in an office that you span of control is too large. The new plan would break the distribution of Orleans Parish staff in the following way:

Uptown District - 164 staff members
Midtown District - 165 staff members
Algiers District - 44 staff members
Downtown District - 97 staff members
Gentilly District - 95 staff members

Although two of the newly created districts will house a little over 160 staff members, they will undoubtedly be more easily manageable than the Tulane Office. Staff would be afforded adequate office space for the use of file cabinets and desk top computers intended to enhance caseload management.

Inadequate Parking

Breaking the Orleans Parish Office into five District Offices will allow for adequate parking for each District Office's staff and clientele as the need for parking space will not be as severe as that of the Tulane Office.

Impaired Delivery of Services

Social work practice supports easy access to services for clients and the location of services geographically to facilitate such access. With the expansion of Eastern New Orleans and the West Bank areas, some citizens must travel long distances to reach the local office. Dividing the Orleans Office into strategically placed geographic District Offices will reduce the span of control in each district to a more manageable size, reduce congestion, reduce safety and security problems, secure adequate space for waiting room and interviewing space, stabilize staff and improve in the timely delivery of services to clients.

The plan was presented to Assistant Secretary, Howard Prejean and was adopted. Effective July 1, 1991 Mary Joseph was named Regional Manager of the newly created Orleans Region IX.