

# Social Services

*Education*

*Information*

*Accountability*

**December 2019**

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## Summary

It is the mission of Social Services to improve the quality of life for people in need<sup>1</sup> who reside in the Town of Windham, by:

- Promoting economic self-sufficiency; and
- Connecting people with those resources made available by the Town, the state and the federal government, in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

Each month the current status of the program will be assessed using the following measures identified in the budget narrative.

**1. People in need are counseled and provided information and referrals regarding local, regional, state and federal social service programs.**

- a. In December, as in previous months, we coordinated with government and community-based agencies that offer resources to strengthen individuals and families and promote economic self-sufficiency, such as Project Feed, USDA, DHHS Emergency Funds, and the Aspire Program. We also coordinated with other providers of social services, such as the Good Shepherd Mobile pantry, Opportunity Alliance which administers LIHEAP; RTP Bus Service, Salvation Army and Neighbors Helping Neighbors.
- b. Social Services made/received eight hundred and forty-five (845) phone calls<sup>2</sup>; interviewed one hundred and sixty (160) individuals for direct general assistance<sup>3</sup>, and provided food/non-food assistance to three hundred and twenty-five (325) households. Each individual was provided education and information regarding additional resources available to them and encouraged to investigate these programs, and in many cases received assistance from staff (phone calls, emails, etc.) to connect with these services.

**2. People in need that qualify for General Assistance under the Ordinance receive temporary assistance for basic needs.**

- a. In December three hundred and twenty-five (325) households in need were assisted by the Food Pantry and/or the Clothes Closet.

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<sup>1</sup> “People in need” are defined to include those people who qualify for financial or other assistance according to regulations issued by the Town, the state and the federal government. As authorized by the Town, Social Services may offer additional services to enhance the quality of life for children, families and seniors.

<sup>2</sup> This number includes calls from those seeking food/non-food, clothing, and/or financial assistance, out-reach to the community and calls made on behalf of clients seeking assistance.

<sup>3</sup> One hundred and twelve (112) Windham; forty-eight (48) Gorham.

- b. Vouchers are provided for housing, winter emergency fuel, or electrical assistance to those who qualify for it, under applicable law<sup>4</sup>. All decisions are rendered within twenty-four (24) hours as required by the state. In December, four (4) Windham residents qualified for direct general assistance.
- c. Staff continued to reach out to members of the community, local businesses and NGO's that support with their time and their donations. In December, the Food Pantry received \$ 7,517.00 in donations and seventy-seven (77) community members volunteered on hundred and eighty-seven (187) hours of their time.

**3. The annual audit demonstrates compliance with state regulations.**

- a. An annual audit was conducted in in March of 2019 by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Field Examiner, Gerry Biron, and he noted 100% compliance in all areas.

All the programs located at the Family Resource Center, support the mission of Social Services and all of those that sought assistance in December received some type of assistance – food/non-food, educational/informational, or financial<sup>5</sup>.

As a result of these efforts, and the generosity of so many groups and individuals, assistance was provided to over six hundred (600) eligible individuals and their families while working to help them to achieve improved self-sufficiency.

## Highlights

- Forty-one (41) families signed up for the Toy Workshop for a total of ninety-four (94) children. All children received gifts, and most were supplied with coats, hats, and mittens too.
- Social Services staff were kept busy. Sixty-seven (67) households signed up for Christmas Baskets.
- Individual, families and the following organizations all adopted children for Christmas: Aroma Joe's Fraternal Order of Eagles, Evergreen Credit Union, GSME Troop 245, Hancock Lumber, Maine Correctional Center, Maine Medical Center's Department of Rehabilitation Medicine, Manchester School, and North Windham Union Church Missions. Many, many thanks!
- The Windham Lion's Club held a "Stuff the Bus" food drive and donated tons of items!
- Studio Flora donated Christmas Wreaths for Food Pantry clients. What a treat!
- Ann Atherton and Cheryl Mannette played elves in helping pack up the children's gifts. Kristie McKinnon supplied stocking stuffers for all the children and did a great job in organizing everything! Many thanks to all.
- Fourteen volunteers helped with the Toy Workshop including, ACO Jackie Frye, Sgt. Ray Williams, Cpt. Bill Andrew, and Officer Aaron Sinclair. They were a great help!
- All clients were encouraged and reminded to come to the Food Pantry each week, in addition to their monthly visits for fresh fruit, vegetables, bread and pastries.

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<sup>4</sup> The Ordinance adopted by Council governs qualification.

<sup>5</sup> To ensure public accountability, the General Assistance Ordinance was objectively, consistently and uniformly applied.

## Statistics

- Two hundred and seventeen (217) households were served through the Food Pantry; six (6) were new clients.
- Seventy-seven (77) volunteers worked a total of one hundred and eighty-seven (187) hours in the Food Pantry and Clothes Closet.
- The Food Pantry received/made four hundred and fourteen (414) phone calls.
- The Clothes Closet received nineteen (19) donations (multiple boxes/bags) of clothing and linens and served one hundred and eight (108) households.
- The Food Pantry received fifty-one (51) donations from residents and fresh fruit, vegetables, baked goods, meat, and bread bi-weekly from Hannaford in Windham.
- Thirty-eight (38) thank you notes and/or receipts were sent to residents for their donations.
- General Assistance received/made four hundred and thirty-one (431) phone calls<sup>6</sup>.
- One hundred and sixty (160) individuals were interviewed for direct general assistance: One hundred and twelve (112) Windham; forty-eight (48) Gorham.
- In December four (4) Windham residents qualified for direct general assistance; and eleven (11) Gorham residents qualified for direct general assistance.

Type of Assistance Requested	Assistance Provided
26 requests for housing assistance	2 were provided financial assistance for rent; all others were referred to Westbrook Housing Authority for Section 8 or Senior Housing.
21 requests for assistance with gas/electrical/water and home repair bills	1 was provided financial assistance; all were referred to DHHS, LIHEAP, the Salvation Army as well as being assisted in signing up for Efficiency Maine/Electricity Maine.
43 requests for emergency winter fuel	0 were provided financial assistance; both were referred to LIHEAP and NHN
1 request for burial/cremation	1 was provided financial assistance.
20 requests for food/non-food/clothing assistance	All were serviced through the Food Pantry and Clothes Closet.

### December Expenses/Donations

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|---------------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|
| ▪ Direct general assistance provided: | 12/01/19 – 12/31/19: | \$ 2,380.34 |
| ▪ Food Pantry monetary donations:     | 12/01/19 – 12/31/19: | \$ 7,517.00 |
| ▪ Food Pantry expenses:               | 12/01/19 – 12/31/19: | \$ 1,147.47 |

### Fiscal Year-to-Date Expenses/Donations

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|---------------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|
| ▪ Direct general assistance provided: | 07/01/19 – 12/31/19: | \$ 5,992.10 |
| ▪ Food Pantry monetary donations:     | 07/01/19 – 12/31/19: | \$17,043.50 |
| ▪ Food Pantry expenses:               | 07/01/19 – 12/31/19: | \$ 2,831.76 |

<sup>6</sup> The number also includes calls for Gorham.