

50-06-05.1. Powers and duties of the department. The department has the following powers and duties to be administered by the department through its state office or through regional human service centers or otherwise as directed by it:

1. To act as the official agency of the state in any social welfare or human service activity initiated by the federal government not otherwise by law made the responsibility of another state agency.
2. To administer, allocate, and distribute any state and federal funds that may be made available for the purpose of providing financial assistance, care, and services to eligible persons and families who do not have sufficient income or other resources to provide a reasonable subsistence compatible with decency and health.
3. To provide preventive, rehabilitative, and other human services to help families and individuals to retain or attain capability for independence or self-care.
4. To do needed research and study in the causes of social problems and to define appropriate and effective techniques in providing preventive and rehabilitative services.
5. To provide for the study, and to promote the well-being, of deprived, unruly, and delinquent children.
6. To provide for the placing and supervision of children in need of substitute parental care, subject to the control of any court having jurisdiction and control of any such child.
7. To recommend appropriate social legislation to the legislative assembly.
8. To direct and supervise county social service board activities as may be financed in whole or in part by or with funds allocated or distributed by the department.
9. To inform the public as to social conditions and ways of meeting social needs.
10. To secure, hold, and administer for the purpose for which it is established, any property and any funds donated to it either by will or deed, or otherwise, or through court order or otherwise available to the department, and to administer those funds or property in accordance with the instructions in the instrument creating them or in accordance with the instructions in the court order or otherwise.
11. To formulate standards and make appropriate inspections and investigations in accordance with such standards in connection with all licensing activities delegated by law to the department including child-care facilities, nonmedical adult-care facilities and maternity homes, and persons or organizations receiving and placing children, and to require those facilities, persons, and organizations to submit reports and information as the department may determine necessary.
12. To permit the making of any surveys of human service needs and activities if determined to be necessary.
13. To issue subpoenas, administer oaths, and compel attendance of witnesses and production of documents or papers whenever necessary in making the investigations provided for herein or in the discharge of its other duties. A subpoena may not be issued to compel the production of documents or papers relating to any private child-caring or child-placing agency or maternity hospital or to compel the attendance as a witness of any officer or employee of those facilities except upon the order of a judge of the district court of the judicial district in which the facilities are located.
14. To provide insofar as staff resources permit appropriate human services, including social histories, social or social-psychological evaluations, individual, group, family, and marital counseling, and related consultation, when referred by self, parent, guardian, county social

service board, court, physician, or other individual or agency, and when application is made by self (if an adult or emancipated youth), parent, guardian, or agency having custody; also, on the same basis, to provide human services to children and adults in relation to their placement in or return from the developmental center at westwood park, Grafton, state hospital, or North Dakota youth correctional center.

15. To provide insofar as staff resources permit social services, including social-psychological evaluations, predisposition reports, treatment, probation, and aftercare services when requested by the judge of a juvenile court, all reports to be kept confidential for the use of the judge except as may be disclosed by the judge.
16. To provide insofar as staff resources permit social services, including social-psychological evaluations, predisposition reports, treatment, and probation and parole services, when requested by the judge in a criminal case, all reports to be kept confidential for use by the judge except as may be disclosed by the judge.
17. To act as the official agency of the state in the administration of the food stamp program and to direct and supervise county administration of that program. Provided, however, that the department with the consent of the budget section of the legislative council may terminate the program if the rate of federal financial participation in administrative costs provided under Public Law 93-347 is decreased or limited, or if the state or counties become financially responsible for all or a portion of the coupon bonus payments under the Food Stamp Act.
18. To administer, allocate, and distribute any funds made available for the making of direct cash assistance payments, housing assistance payments, and rental subsidies under any rental assistance programs initiated by the federal government not otherwise by law made the responsibility of another state agency possessing statewide jurisdiction.
19. To act as the official agency of the state in the administration of the energy assistance program; to direct and supervise county administration of that program; and to take such actions, give such directions, and adopt such rules, subject to review in the courts of this state, as may be necessary or desirable to carry out this subsection. For purposes of the administration of the energy assistance program, funds are obligated at the earlier of the time a written commitment is made to pay a vendor or contractor for services or supplies delivered or to be delivered, or at the time payment is made to a vendor or contractor for services or supplies delivered or to be delivered. The provisions of this subsection concerning obligation of funds apply to payments and commitments made on or after July 1, 1991. The department with the consent of the budget section of the legislative council may terminate the program if the rate of federal financial participation in administrative costs is decreased or limited to less than fifty percent of total administrative costs, or if the state or counties become financially responsible for all or a portion of the cost of energy assistance program benefits.
20. To administer, allocate, and distribute any funds made available for the payment of the cost of the special needs of any child under the age of twenty-one years, who is living in an adoptive home and would probably go without adoption except for acceptance by the adopted family, and whose adopted family does not have the economic ability and resources, as established by the department, to take care of the special needs of the child, including legal fees, maintenance costs, medical and dental expenses, travel costs, and other costs incidental to the care of the child.
21. To exercise and carry out any other powers and duties granted the department under state law.
22. To coordinate services for pregnant women.
23. To administer, allocate, and distribute any funds made available for the payment of transitional living services, to develop standards and conduct needs assessments regarding transitional living services, to develop or approve and to evaluate demonstration projects offering transitional living programs, to approve transitional living facilities for the purpose of providing foster care, and to apply for and administer federal and other funds

that may be made available to undertake any of the activities described in this subsection. For purposes of this subsection:

- a. "Transitional living facility" means a specific site, identified by a licensed child-placing agency and approved by the department, for the provision of transitional living services.
 - b. "Transitional living program" means a program that provides transitional living services and may include an identified program operations location approved by the department.
 - c. "Transitional living services" may include housing, supervision, and supportive services intended and designed to assist persons who have received foster care services and who have reached age seventeen, but who have not reached age twenty-one, to achieve independence and self-sufficiency.
24. With the approval of the governor, to lease or transfer use of any part of the developmental center facilities or properties, located in section thirteen, township one hundred fifty-seven north, range fifty-three west, located in Walsh County, North Dakota, to the federal government, or any public or private agency, organization, or business enterprise, or any worthy undertaking, under the following provisions:
- a. The department determines that the facility or property is not needed to serve any present or reasonably foreseeable need of the developmental center.
 - b. The transaction is exempt from the provisions of section 50-06-06.6.
 - c. The term of any lease may not exceed ninety-nine years.
 - d. All required legal documents, papers, and instruments in any transaction must be reviewed and approved as to form and legality by the attorney general.
 - e. Any funds realized by any transaction must be deposited in the state's general fund.
25. To act as a decedent's successor for purposes of collecting amounts due to the department. Any affidavit submitted by the department under section 30.1-23-01 must conform to the requirements of that section except that the affidavit may state that twenty days have elapsed since the death of the decedent.
26. To provide those services necessary for the department and for county social service boards to comply with the provisions of any law, rule, order, or regulation of the United States or any federal agency or authority requiring civil service or merit standards or classifications as a condition for providing funds administered by the department.
27. To provide for the qualifications for and the membership of a qualified board as required by section 12.1-32-15.
28. For purposes of administration of programs, and subject to legislative appropriation, funds are obligated at the time a written commitment is made to pay a vendor or contractor for services or supplies either delivered or to be delivered. This subsection applies to payments and commitments made on or after January 1, 1997.
29. Notwithstanding section 50-01.2-00.1, to determine eligibility for medical assistance and children's health insurance program benefits when the department receives a joint application for these benefits.

