

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 11, 2016

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May Is Public Assistance Fraud Awareness Month

New Philadelphia, OHIO – May is Public Assistance Fraud Awareness Month in Ohio, and the Tuscarawas County Job & Family Services is spreading the word that “Fraud Costs All of Us.” You may have seen our video on our Facebook page, and if you haven’t, please check it out! Our employees put together a wonderful, informative video on fraud awareness and abuse.

Tuscarawas County Job & Family Services investigated 249 complaints in 2015 and \$138,000 was collected in fraud overpayments.

In 2015, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services disbursed about \$2.5 billion in SNAP food assistance, \$259 million in Ohio Works First cash assistance and \$573 million in child care subsidies. Individuals who mislead caseworkers or lie on an application for benefits account for a very small percentage of the funding disbursed, but the department takes even the smallest fraud cases very seriously.

Three of the main concerns are: (1) clients not reporting correctly who is in their home, (2) clients not reporting earned income (when did you start working?), and (3) clients not reporting unearned income (unemployment benefits, worker’s compensation, social security income). Clients are required to report changes within 10 days.

Individuals found to be committing fraud are removed from the program, must repay any improperly obtained benefits, and may face criminal charges and jail time. Residents of Tuscarawas County may report suspected public assistance fraud by calling the Tuscarawas County Job & Family Services at 330-339-7791, or going to www.jfs.ohio.gov/fraud.