

## Help **PREVENT WELFARE FRAUD** in Hanover County

Do you know of someone committing Welfare Fraud in Hanover County? We want to hear from you!

Hanover Department of Social Services is strongly committed to identifying and eliminating fraud against its programs.

### **What are Welfare Benefits?**

- Cash Assistance (TANF)
- Food Stamps (SNAP)
- Medical Assistance
- Child Care
- Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
- VIEW

### **How Can You Help?**

**If You Know Someone on Welfare who is:**

- NOT reporting income
- NOT reporting ownership of resources or property
- NOT reporting who lives in the household
- OR is taking advantage of the system in ANY way

### **What will happen when I Contact the Fraud Department?**

**Q: Will I be asked to give my name?**

**A: YES.** You are not obligated to give your name; however, providing your name gives investigators a point of contact, in the event that follow-up information is needed.

**Q: Will my call be taken seriously?**

**A: YES.** All calls of possible welfare abuse and fraud are investigated, even if the call is anonymous.

**Q: Will the Fraud Department reveal my name to the person(s) I am reporting?**

**A: NO.** Even if you decide to give your name when you call, your name is held confidential.

**Q: Will I be told of the outcome of the investigation?**

**A: NO.** All investigations are confidential.

**Q: What can happen to someone who is reported for Welfare fraud?**

**A:** After an investigation, if an individual is found to have committed fraud, they may be disqualified from receiving future benefits; they may have to re-pay their benefits, and in some cases may be prosecuted criminally. The Department of Social Services does not control the sentence ordered by the court.

**You can remain anonymous when reporting suspected fraud.**

**NOTE:** Because of strict confidentiality laws, we are **NOT** able to provide you with information regarding the outcome or specifics of an investigation.

***Why should I report Welfare Fraud?***

Fraud and abuse significantly impacts the welfare programs by using up valuable dollars necessary to help eligible children and adults.

Fraud and abuse is actively pursued by fraud investigators.

They investigate allegations of fraud being committed in Child Care Program, Food Stamps, Cash, Medical, and Energy Assistance. They initiate administrative, civil and criminal action against persons who abuse or commit fraud in the various welfare programs.

**Welfare Fraud:** Fraud involving more than \$200.00 is a felony. The **Code of Virginia (63.2-522)** deems any person who obtains assistance or benefits by means of a willful false statement or who knowingly fails to notify of a change in circumstances that could affect eligibility for assistance is guilty of larceny. The Code of Virginia deems whosoever knowingly and with intent to defraud transfers, acquires, alters, traffics in or uses, or aids or abets another person in transferring acquiring, altering, trafficking in, using or possession food stamps, electronic benefit transfer cards or other devices subject to federal reserve system regulations regarding electronic benefits from fuel assistance programs, in any manner not authorized by law shall be deemed guilty of larceny and, upon conviction thereof, be punished accordingly. Upon conviction, the Code of Virginia authorizes punishment according to state law.

**Repayment:** In addition to any criminal punishment as set forth in the Code of Virginia, anyone who receives benefits from the Department of Social Services by withholding information or by misusing the EBT card will be required to repay the amount of the improper payment(s). Repayment will be according to a repayment agreement between the responsible person(s) and the local Department of Social Services Code of Virginia.

**Report changes timely and give correct information to your worker.**

To Report Suspected Welfare Fraud in Hanover County  
Call 804 / 365-4132  
Public Assistance Fraud is a Crime

***When Reporting Suspected Welfare Fraud, make sure to give as much information as possible:***

Client's Name  
Client's Address  
Date of Birth, or Age  
What is the alleged fraud?  
Please list the name(s) of individual(s) involved  
If they are employed, where do they work?  
How long has the fraud occurred?  
List the names of witnesses who can verify the alleged fraud