

SOCIAL SERVICES TRENDS

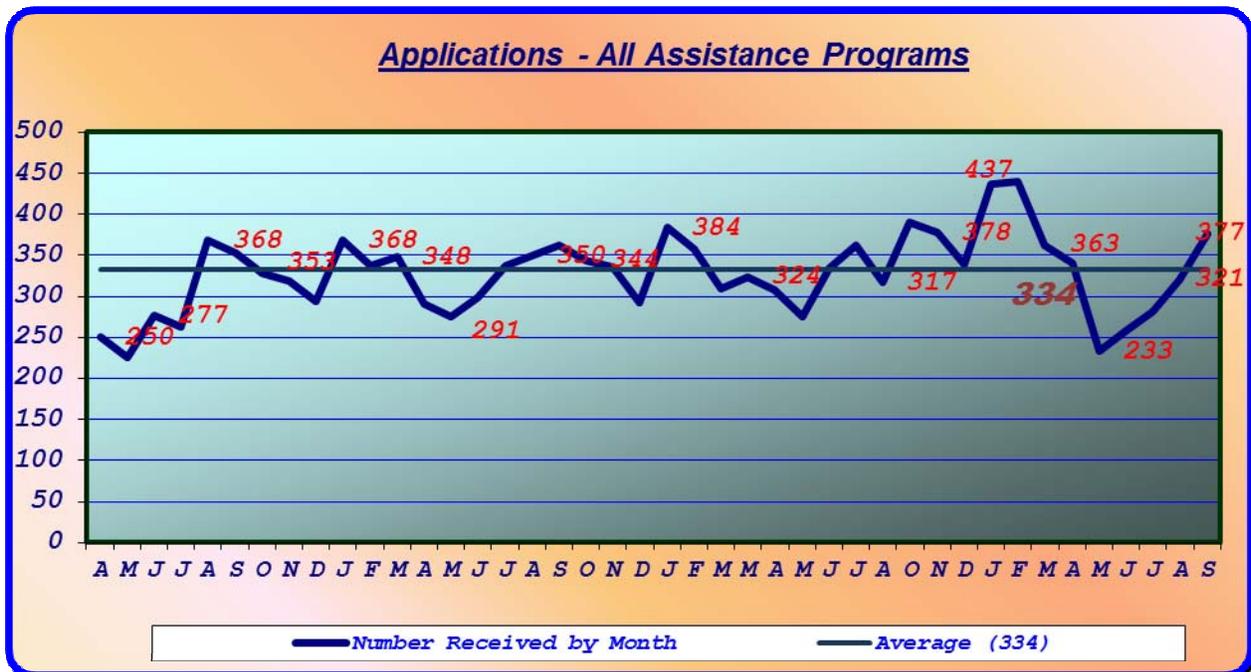
Quarter Ending: September 30, 2014

Social Services Trends is a quarterly report to the Plumas County Board of Supervisors and members of the public. This report provides case counts, application data, referrals for services and other workload information in the Department of Social Services. This edition of Trends includes case counts and workload data for the three-month quarter that ended September 30, 2014. The Department welcomes questions regarding the information contained in this report or about our programs and services. Additional information regarding our programs is available by calling 530-283-6350 or by accessing the Plumas County web site at www.countyofplumas.com.

I. WELFARE TO WORK & PUBLIC ASSISTANCE DIVISION

A. APPLICATIONS RECEIVED

Application counts grew some through the July through September period of 2014. Generally speaking however, there appears now to have been some stability in application counts for the three year period that is displayed below, with the exception of last January and February where the application counts exceeded 400. That increase was associated with the Affordable Care Act. With the exception of those two anomalous months, the application count has remained close to the average of 334 per month.



B. CONTINUING CASES

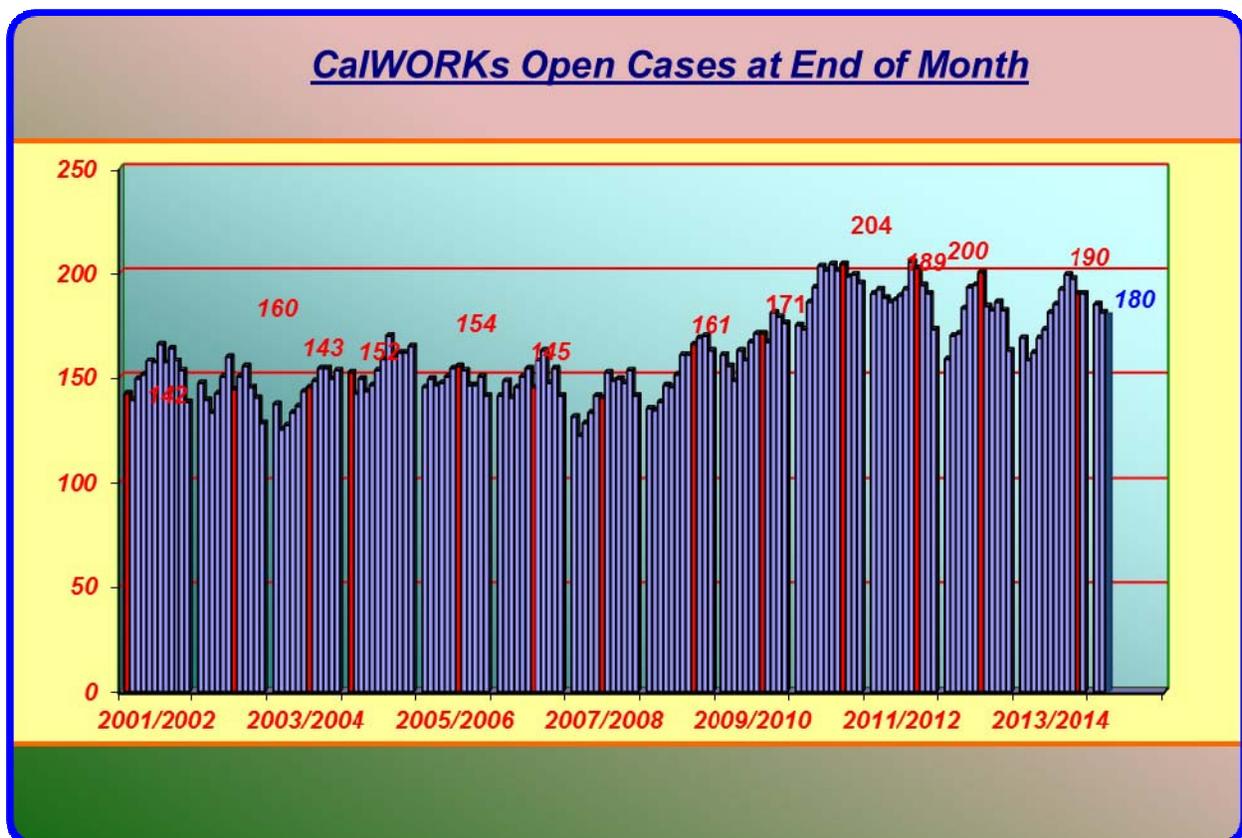
(1). Cash Assistance (AFDC/CalWORKs)

The case count for CalWORKs assistance has continued to stay in a range that fluctuates between 150-200 cases. The case count dropped again during the past three months (180 cases at the end of September). One-third of the CalWORKs cases are “child only” cases meaning that the adult has another source of income and is likely a non-needy adult relative. Nearly all of these cases involve children who’ve been placed in the home of a relative or a non-relative extended family member. Those children remain eligible for CalWORKs assistance during the entire period of their placement.

The drop in case count during the summer months is encouraging for two reasons. Typically the drop during this period is associated with CalWORKs recipients earning sufficient income from employment that they no longer need to rely on CalWORKs cash. The lower case count during this period not only reflects that, but also that there are jobs to be found for the former recipients.

Average Monthly Caseload

2011/2012	191
2012/2013	181
2013/2014	180



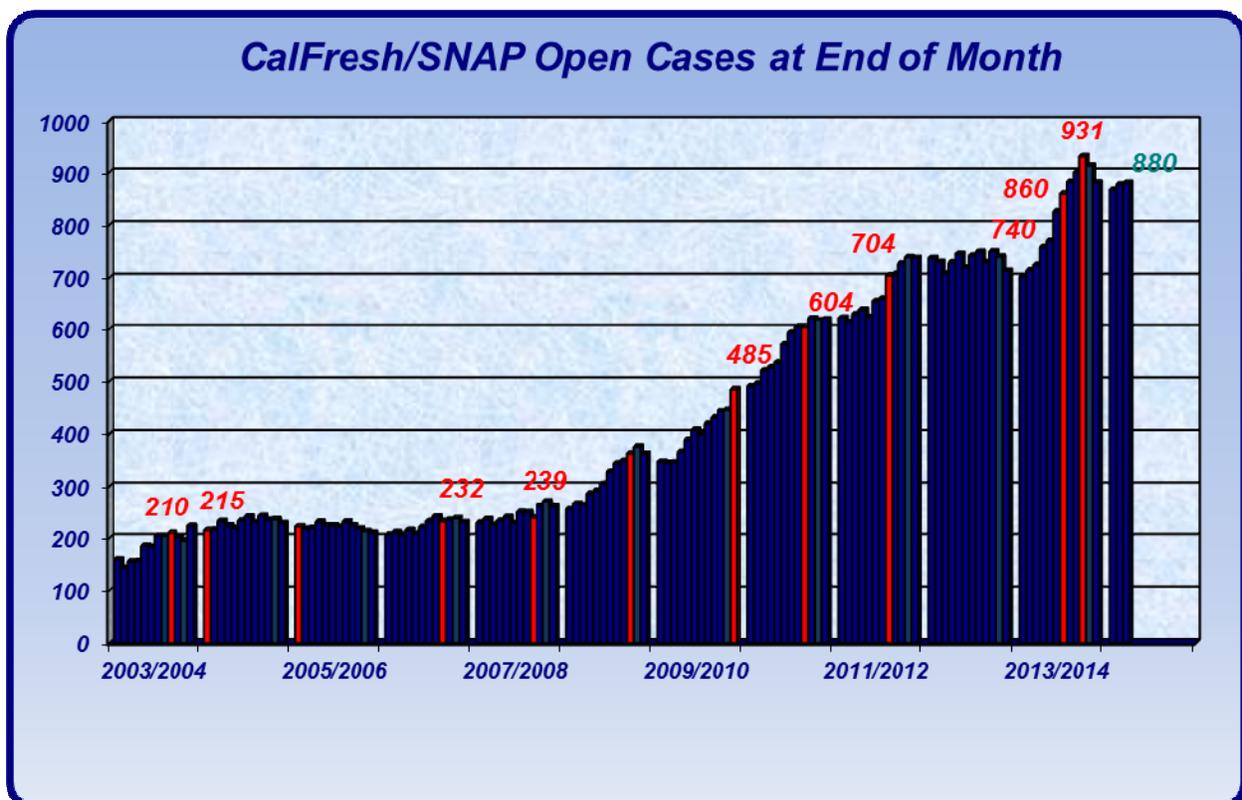
(2). CalFresh (Food Stamps) Assistance

A. Case Count

The case count totaled 931 at the end of April. In the Department's Trends Report for the quarter that ended June 30, 2014, we noted that we believed it to be likely that the pattern of growth in this case count was coming to an end. We noted that there were some signs of growth in employment and that this could lead to a decline in the case count for CalFresh assistance. We note that the case count for the most recent quarter has remained below the 900 count threshold which we believe continues to reflect a modest, but positive change in job opportunities. We are hopeful that this trend remains through the Fall quarter.

Average Monthly Caseload

2011/2012	672
2012/2013	733
2013/2014	822



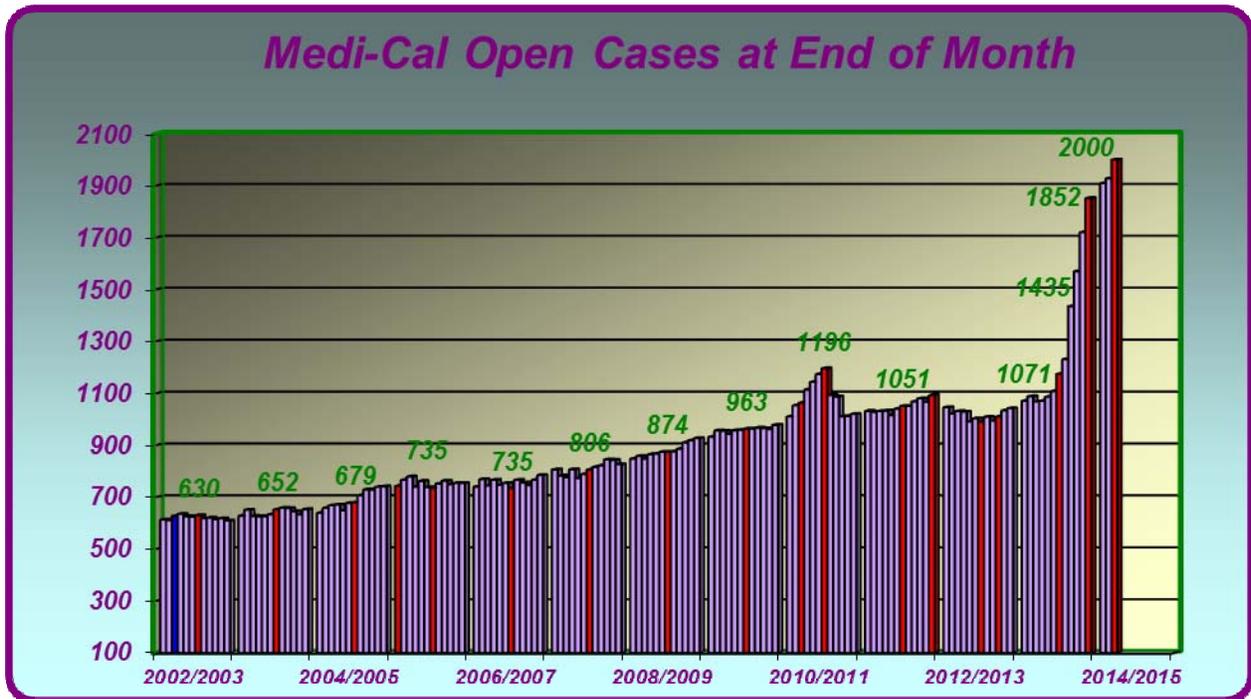
(3). Medi-Cal

The Department’s estimates had been that new Medi-Cal cases that would be added as a result of the Affordable Care Act might be in the range of between 500 to 700 new cases. As the case count data presented below shows, those estimates were low. In July, 2013 the count for open Medi-Cal cases was 1071 cases. At the end of September, 2014 (fifteen months later) the count was 2000 cases. The caseload has almost doubled.

A new open enrollment period began on November 15, 2014. While we don’t expect the volume of new cases that came to us during the prior year, we do expect the case count to continue to grow.

Average Monthly Caseload

2011/2012	1049
2012/2013	1017
2013/2014	1459

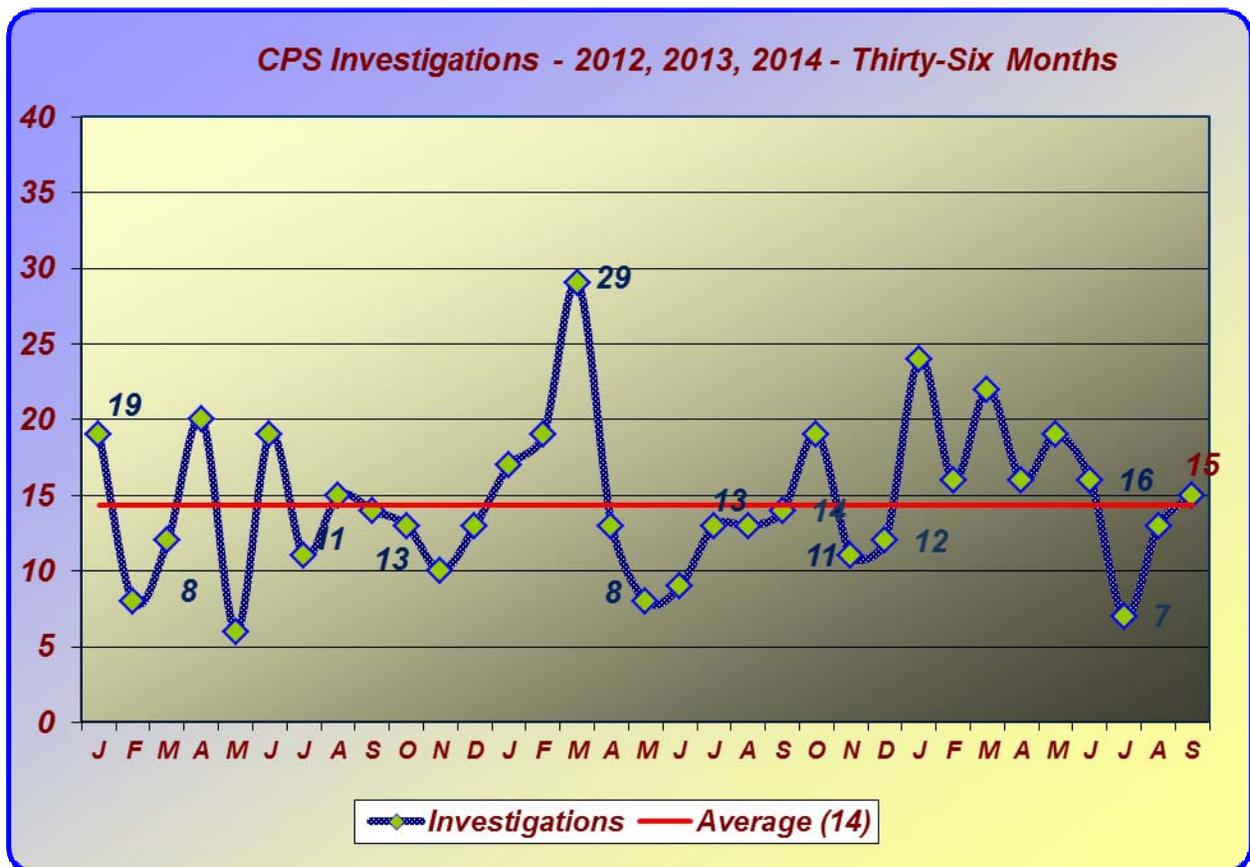


II. SOCIAL SERVICES DIVISION

A. Child Welfare Services

The Emergency Response component of Child Protective Services averages in the range of about 14 child abuse investigations per month. During this most recent quarter, the number of investigations was nearly at or below the average level for the past thirty-three months, closing out the quarter with 15 investigations in September.

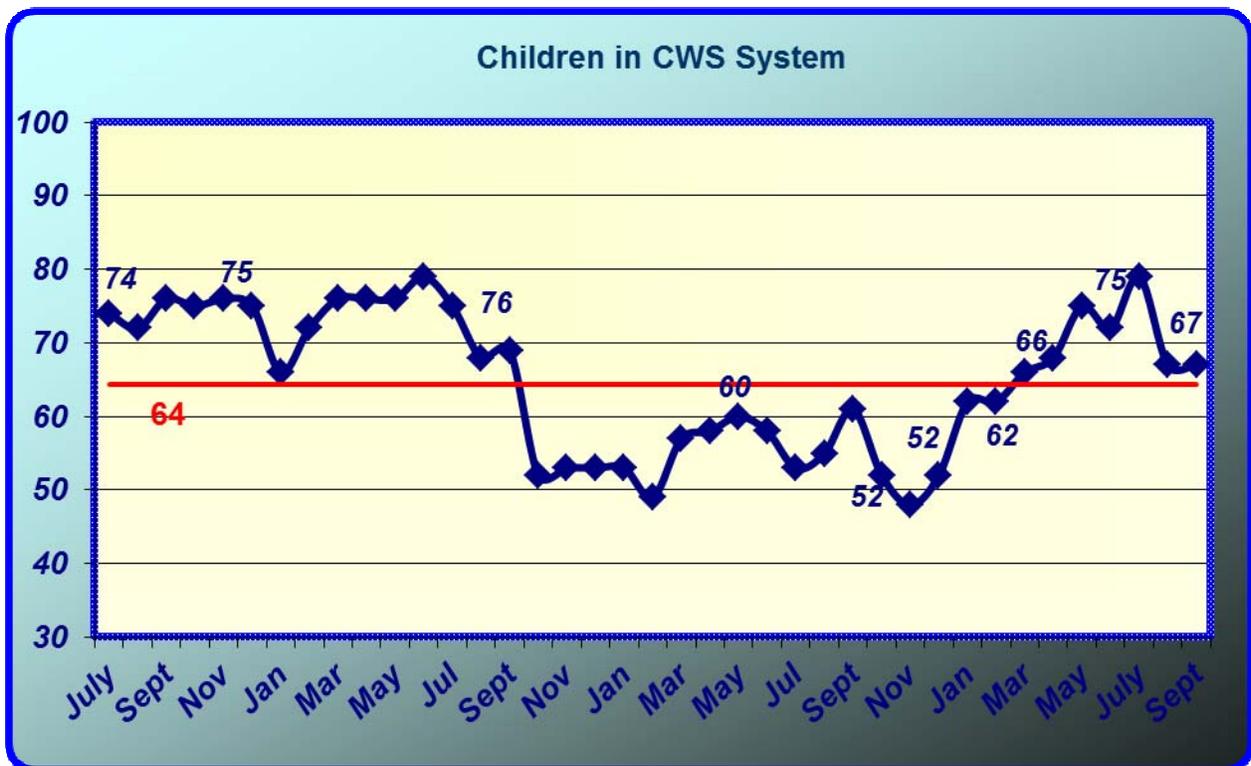
As the Department has noted previously, we have continued to experience significant numbers of cases where the precipitating factors leading to abuse and neglect are associated with substance abuse, in particular methamphetamine but also alcohol and other drugs. Substance abuse is the foremost reason that children are removed from unsafe environments.



B. Children in the Child Welfare Services System

As has been reported previously, changes in the law under Assembly Bill 12 of 2012 some children to stay in the Child Welfare System longer. This had led to some growth in the count of the number of children in our system.

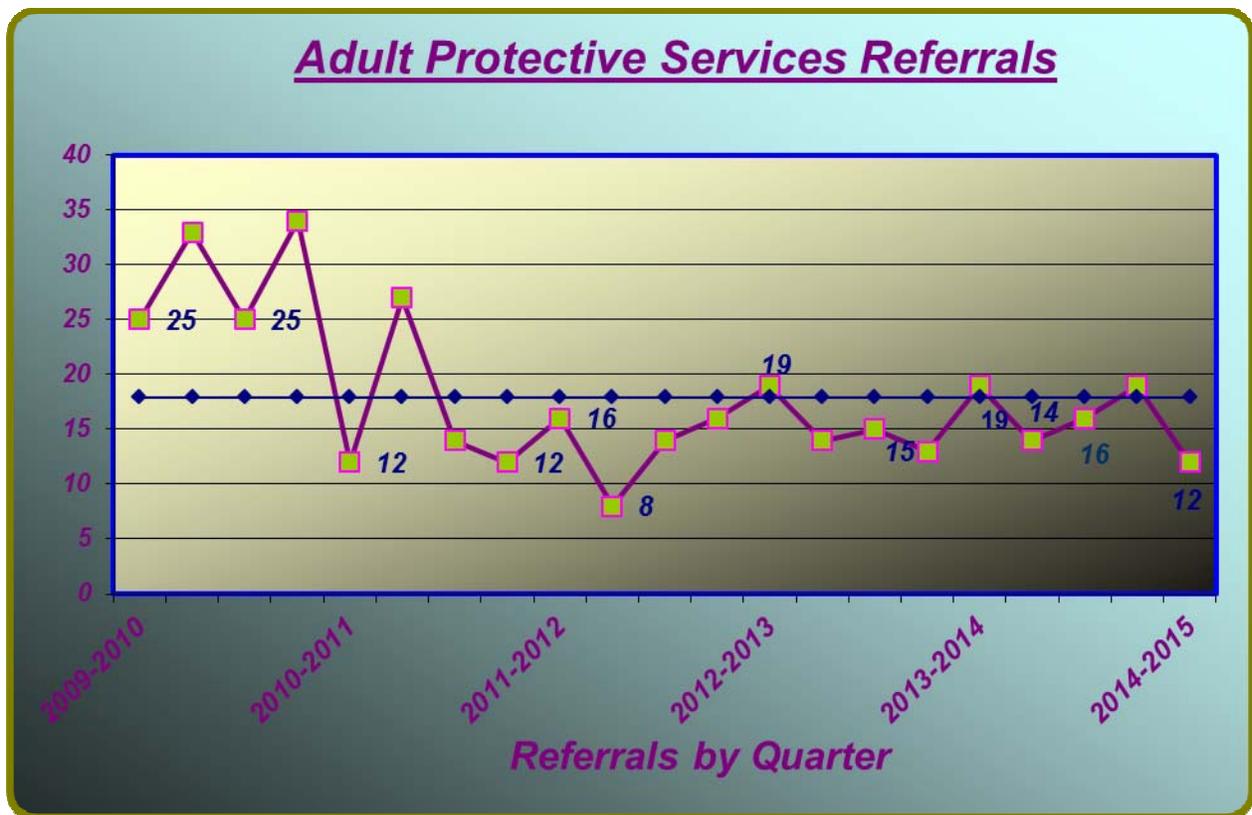
The Department has continued its trend toward placing foster children with relatives and with non-related extended family members. This has placed us in a position where we are less reliant on foster family agencies and foster homes for placement resources. We expect that trend to continue.



C. Adult Protective Services

Referrals for investigation of adults who've been abused or neglected have remained at below average levels for the past thirty-six months. The average rate has been about 18 referrals per quarter. For the three month quarter that ended in September, the Department received 12 referrals.

Referrals from financial institutions regarding suspicious circumstances connected with an elderly or disabled person's bank account have continued to account for many of the requests for investigation we receive.



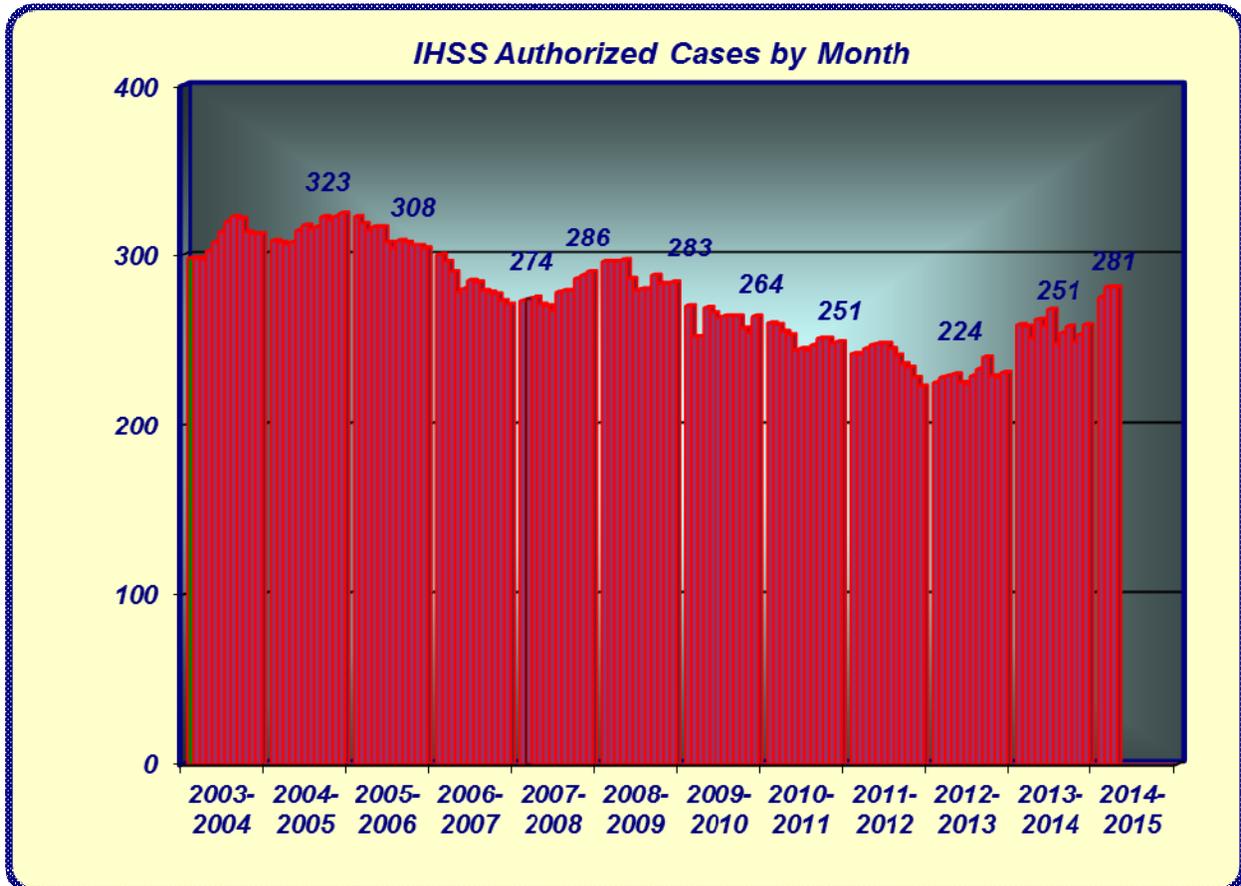
D. In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS)

The IHSS program experienced a fairly steady period of case count decline from around 2009 to mid-2013. Those reductions in case count were linked to several state regulation and legislative changes that both changed eligibility requirements and reduced the number of authorized hours that could be approved under some circumstances.

With the advent of the Affordable Care Act, the Department determined that it would be likely that the case count might grow some due to people becoming eligible for Medi-Cal (federal Medicaid), as IHSS is funded by Medicaid dollars. That has turned out to be a correct prediction. We believe that we will continue to see some growth in this program due to the ACA.

Average Monthly Case Count

2011/2012	240
2012/2013	229
2013/2014	256



III. PUBLIC GUARDIAN

The Public Guardian currently provides guardianship and conservator services to a total of 11 LPS and Probate conservatees. The Public Guardian also serves as representative payee for 10 SSI recipients.