



Government of Bermuda
Ministry of Youth, Social Development and Seniors

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

by:

The Hon. Tinee S. Furbert, JP, MP
Minister of Youth, Social Development and Seniors

2024 – 2025 Annual Report of the Department of Financial Assistance

Friday, 27th February 2026

Mr. Speaker,

I rise today to present the Department of Financial Assistance (DFA) Annual Report for 2024 -2025 to this Honourable House. In compliance with Section 3(4) of the Financial Assistance Act 2001, the report has been made publicly accessible for viewing.

Mr. Speaker,

The Annual Report highlights several meaningful results achieved during this reporting period, which includes:

1. A decrease of 1% in the number of persons receiving financial assistance.
2. An increase in the number of child day care allowance recipients as a result of financial assistance reform measures enacted in prior years.

3. The introduction of the Short-Term Relief Benefit Programme, specifically designed to provide temporary assistance to eligible individuals facing sudden and unforeseen financial hardships.
4. Enhanced monitoring and control of DFA's expenditure.
5. Improved governance and client case management practices.
6. Continued advancement of financial assistance reform initiatives including provision of a personal care allowance for clients residing in licensed nursing and residential care homes.

Mr. Speaker,

The report illustrates a one-year performance trend for DFA. Consistent with prior years, the categories of recipients from the highest to the lowest participants, remain pensioners, persons with disabilities, persons with low earnings, and abled-bodied unemployed persons. For the fiscal year 2024/25 the average number of recipients of financial assistance services was 1,977. This represented a decrease from the average of 1,991 recipients registered in the prior fiscal year. The recipient categories are: 1,043 pensioners and seniors; 728 persons with disabilities; 132 persons with low earnings; and 74 abled-bodied unemployed persons.

Mr. Speaker,

The monthly average number of children eligible for the Child Day Care Allowance Programme in 2024/2025 was 260, compared to 158 in the prior reporting period. This represents an increase of 65% and is attributable to the financial assistance reform measures enacted in prior periods.

Mr. Speaker,

Actual programme expenditure for grants directly supporting financial assistance and child day care allowance recipients totalled \$51.74 million.

The highest financial assistance expenditures were rent, nursing and rest home fees, food, and health insurance for HIP and Future Care.

Mr. Speaker,

Work continues in earnest to improve governance and oversight. DFA conducts monthly compliance activities, with specific focus on the use of data analytics to ensure compliance with Financial Instructions, the Financial Assistance Act 2001, Financial Assistance Regulations 2004, the Child Day Allowance Act and Regulations 2008, and the Financial Assistance (Short-Term Relief Benefit) Act 2024. These measures enable DFA to demonstrate compliance with legislation, improve service delivery to meet client needs and minimize financial and operational risks. During the period 2024/2025, transaction monitoring was performed on 78,023 - line transactions with no non-compliance issues identified.

Mr. Speaker,

The Department of Financial Assistance team continues to make strides on transforming service delivery, to ensure that clients experience professional and high-quality assistance. During this reporting period the team continued to apply the Government of Bermuda's 'Service Standards' to further improve service delivery to clients.

Mr. Speaker,

The report provides information that demonstrates ongoing work being performed to maintain fiscal responsibility by strengthening expenditure monitoring and reducing the risk of fraud.

Stringent procedures are constantly being reviewed to ensure that the Investigative Officers utilize and apply the established compliance guidelines. Additionally, DFA works closely with the Attorney-General's

Chambers to recover overpayments made to clients as a result of fraud and abuse of the financial assistance system.

Mr. Speaker,

The Ministry of Youth, Social Development and Seniors (Ministry) extend sincere appreciation to the staff of the Department of Financial Assistance and to all partners who collaborated to support the work that is being carried out. These efforts ensure that Bermudians in need are able to access essential services that support a respectable minimum standard of living.

Mr. Speaker,

It remains the goal of this Ministry to not only provide assistance, but also, to position Bermudians for gainful, and sustainable employment opportunities. The Ministry will continue to work closely with the Department of Workforce Development to ensure individuals are better equipped with the skills, training and support necessary to access employment opportunities within the labour market and to increase their participation in Bermuda's workforce. This benefits the clients as well as Bermuda.

The Financial Assistance Annual Report is online at gov.bm now and hard copies will be available next week at the Ministry of Youth, Social Development and Seniors Headquarters located at Veritas Place, 6th Floor, 65 Court Street, Hamilton and the Department of Financial Assistance, Global House, 1st Floor, 43 Church Street, Hamilton.

Thank you, **Mr. Speaker.**