

The History of Metropolitan Social Services - From Then to Now



1879 – State Legislature determined that administering “poor relief” was responsibility of Justices of the Peace.

1937 – Tennessee Welfare Act provided the state would share responsibility for assistance to the needy elderly and blind persons and dependent children.

1943 - City of Nashville created a Department of Welfare.

1953 – State Legislature authorized sharing responsibility for aid to permanently and totally disabled persons.

1955 – Creation of the Davidson County Welfare Commission, through private act of the State Legislature. First Executive Director hired.

- * Administered by 9-member Board
- * Provide general relief to residents and nonresidents in Davidson County, engage in study and research on cause of financial dependency and enter into cooperative agreements with other State and City welfare agencies for the administration of welfare programs.

1964 – **Metropolitan Social Services** was created under the charter of the newly formed Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County.

Metropolitan Social Services began with the creation of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County when the Metro Charter passed on June 28, 1962. Section 11.1101 created a 7-member commission.

The Charter assigned powers and duties including:

- * Administer general assistance in Davidson County.
- * Make social investigations and reports to government agencies.
- * Study and research on cause of financial dependency and methods to better treat such dependency.
- * Administer public and private grants . . . Supervise and operate welfare facilities . . . Supervise the Children's Home and Knowles Home for the Aged, etc.

Metropolitan Social Services has operated under 7 Mayors of the Metropolitan Government.



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|----------------|-----------|
| Beverly Briley | 1963-1975 |
| Richard Fulton | 1975-1987 |
| Bill Boner | 1987-1991 |
| Phil Bredesen | 1991-2007 |
| Bill Purcell | 1999-2007 |
| Karl Dean | 2007-2015 |

Current Mayor Megan Barry (2015 -)



Metropolitan Social Services
5 Executive Directors

Camilla Caldwell

William Moynihan

Michael Miller

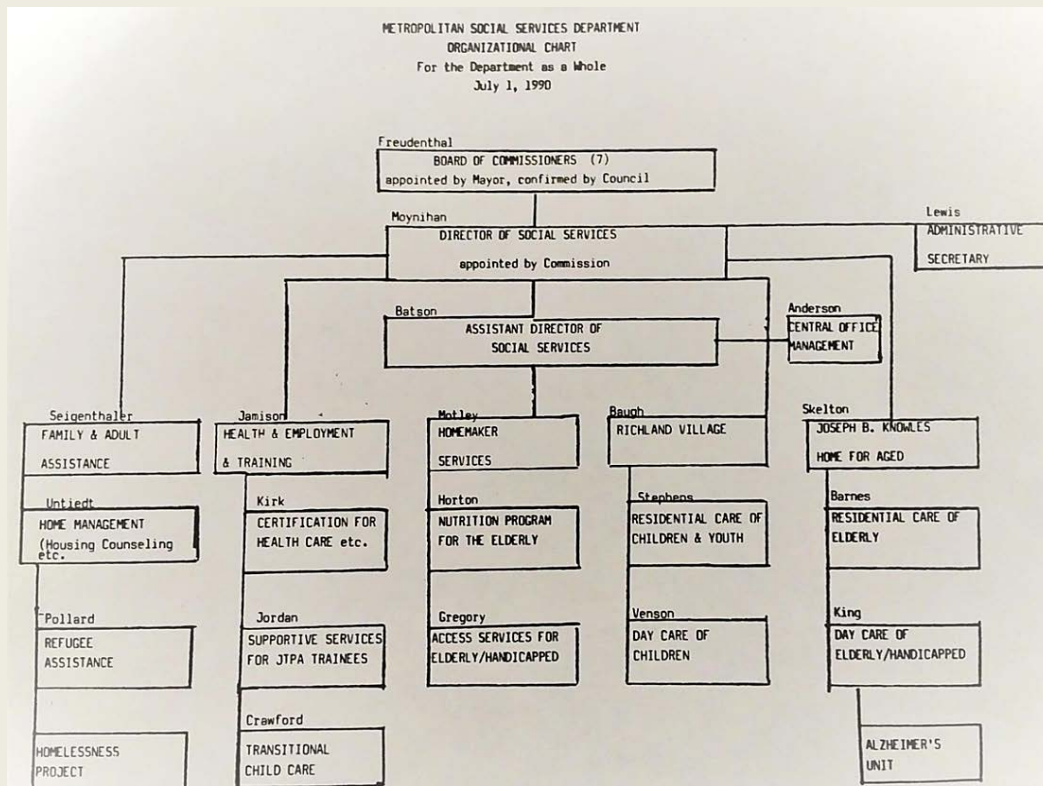
Dorothy Berry

Geraldine Robinson

Renee Pratt

Since it was formed in 1964, Metropolitan Social Services has had 5 Executive Directors.

A 1990 organizational chart for Metro Social Services shows that it provided an array of services with a budget of approximately \$8 million, including Family & Adult Assistance, Home Management, Refugee Assistance, Homelessness Project, Health & Employment Training, Certification for Health Care, Supportive Services for JTPA Trainees, Transitional Child Care, Homemaker Services, Nutrition for the Elderly, Access Services for Elderly and Disabled, Richland Village Residential Care of Children and Youth, Day Care for Children, Joseph B. Knowles Home for the Aged, Adult Day Care, and an Alzheimer's Disease Unit.



These are highlights of the evolution of Metropolitan Social Services.

Growth and Expansion

- Late 1960s – Health Certification began to screen applicants for health services and medication from the Health Department
- 1970s – Child Care Center opened to provide care for children of low-income working parents; Home Management began and help people facing evictions and other problems; using federal Older Americans funds, began Adult Day Care at Knowles Home and a Nutrition Program with 20 meal sites
- 1980s – Using federal Older Americans funds began a Homemaker Program; added Alzheimer's Unit to Adult Day Care at Knowles Home; Senior Information Program transferred from Mayor's Office; Disability Information Office transferred from Metro Human Resources; Senior Adult Transportation transferred from Metro Action Commission.
- 1990s – Expanded involvement with job training and welfare reform initiatives; using state funds added Child Care Broker Program with case management for JOBSWORKS participants; began Refugee Services Program to provide employment services, social adjustment and English language training for refugees; began to administer the Caring for Children Program

Transfers and Closures

- 2000 – Health Certification transferred to General Hospital; Families First returned to the State
- 2001 – Child Care Broker and JTPA returned to the state
- 2002 – Richland Village Residential Care Program Closed (Brian A); began Richland Village Community Services; Caring for Children Program transferred to Metro Finance Department
- May 2004 – Performance Audit released by Metro Finance in which Maximus recommended that MSS reduce its staff to 22 and discontinue all direct services, eliminate financial assistance to clients, create Planning & Coordination; develop a Homelessness Task Force.

Additional Audit Consequences

2005 – MSS Board adopted a new business model, incorporating several recommendations of the performance audit. MSS retained administrative functions, Adult and Family Support Services and Planning & Coordination.

Transferred Transportation Program to MTA; transferred Refugee Services to Catholic Charities, Family Assistance Program transferred to Metro Action Commission; closed Richland Village. Metro Council created the Metropolitan Homelessness Commission through ordinance that placed it at MSS.

Adjusting and Regrouping

- 2007 – Metro Council moved the Homelessness Commission from MSS to MDHA by ordinance
- 2009 – MSS released its first annual Community Needs Evaluation
- 2010 – Planning & Coordination was asked to monitor and coordinate the implementation of a Poverty Reduction Plan that had been developed by MAC, the Chamber of Commerce and others. A Poverty Council with community representation was created
- 2011 – The Metro Council passed an ordinance to return the Homelessness Commission to MSS
- 2014 – MSS began the process to close the Homemaker Program through attrition.



During the 2015-2016 Fiscal Year, Metropolitan Social Services:

- Provided family support services to 3,251 customers, including 1,848 new customers.
- Served customers who were referred from the Public Defender's Office, the MNPS Homeless Education Resources Outreach Program, the Mayor's Office and other organizations.
- Provided basic needs financial assistance to 71 families.
- Supplied 174,484 meals to 11,238 seniors, including 269 new customers.
- Provided families with 76 food boxes and 29 food vouchers.
- Provided 7,487 trips for 919 seniors. Gave 1,147 MTA bus passes to job and housing seekers.
- Provided 10,415 hours of homemaker and personal care services to 96 customers.
- Provided 115 burials and 26 cremations.
- Prepared and distributed the 7th Annual Community Needs Evaluation.
- Prepared and made available the 2nd Annual Know Your Community, with 25 data sets for each Metro Council District, with maps.
- Hosted the 4th Annual Ride 2 Thrive event for families.
- Through the Metropolitan Homelessness Commission, participated in an initiative to end veteran homelessness and assisted 412 veterans 1,043 people who were chronically homeless. MHC partnered with others to end homelessness for youth and young adults.