

PARIS
Public Assistance Reporting
Information System



PARIS Newsletter

PARIS is operated under the auspices of the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

Official PARIS website:
www.acf.hhs.gov/paris

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Q and A's

We are starting a new section of the Newsletter that will incorporate questions we, the Board receive, and also suggestions and information we feel may help states with their PARIS matches.

Q: What should my state do with the PARIS Statistical Interstate Matches report we get each quarter via a PARIS Transmittal?

A: There are several things you can use this report. For example:

1. You can use it to validate the matched Interstate file your state received back.
2. You can see a count of individuals matching with two or more states.
3. You can use it to quickly identify states that you matched with, and frequency. Those with the highest frequency can be contacted directly to validate the numbers and/or do a special project to reduce the numbers between both states.
4. You can use it as a tool when educating the executive team on potential savings from working the PARIS Interstate match.

Q: What are some more imaginative things being done with the VA and/or Federal files?

A: Several SPAA's (State Public Assistance Agencies) isolate information from recipient address information within the PARIS Files. For example, the VA file has a "country" code. A veteran receiving his VA benefits in "Mexico" or "Canada" might need be questioned about why that is happening. Taking this a step further, it is not uncommon to see benefits listed within the Federal and Veteran PARIS files to be issued to states other than your own. Mainland states can often see benefits issued to the zip code 00707 (Puerto Rico). This is very common and worthy of questioning, if you are not Puerto Rico. Again, those PARIS matched recipients meeting this "out of state" observation can be isolated and prioritized for investigation.

Verify State Contact Information

It is very important to verify the state contact information prior to your data submissions to DMDC. There have been recent submissions where state contact information was omitted or outdated and this causes additional burdens to the receiving states.

Please verify your point of contact for the State Administrative Representatives and State Interstate Match Contact instructions found on the PARIS website. These state contacts on the PARIS website are separate and distinct from the contacts that should be used with your data submissions to DMDC.

The federal budget worries of this past year have settled down, however ACF is still operating with reduced funding. The budget delays going into the second quarter of this fiscal year have impacted the logistics being in place for the 2014 annual training conference to occur prior to the end of this September. ACF is taking steps to insure that all needed logistics for the 2015 annual training conference can start early in the next fiscal year. As we go into the second year without a conference, the Board of Directors are always available to answer your PARIS questions.

HHS Office of the Inspector General conducted a PARIS / Medicaid survey last year. The results of the survey were briefed to ACF and CMS on April 9th. Once the document is published, it will be posted on the PARIS website.

**Tom Miller, PARIS Project Officer
Administration for Children and
Families U.S. Department of Health
and Human Services**

The next PARIS Quarterly Match is
Friday, May 9, 2014.

From Mr. PARIS President

I hope that this newsletter finds the PARIS community enjoying the onset of warmer weather and the promise of summer.

As Tom stated, the logistics to plan and host a 2014 PARIS annual training conference make it virtually impossible to arrange prior to the end of the fiscal year. Tom and Oscar Tanner have stated that they are confident of a 2015 Training Conference, perhaps at the usual time during the latter portion of the first quarter next year. In the meantime, as always, the Board is available for any questions, concerns and needs that you may have. Any ideas or suggestions that you may have for the next conference, or perhaps something that you might like to share with the PARIS community, is both encouraged and welcomed by all of us on the Board.

I have been in contact with many of you who are assimilating information for your respective state in pursuing a Medicaid veteran benefit enhancement related effort. This is not only encouraging, but I'm certain you will find it the win-win program it has been for us over the past twelve years. Our program was recently awarded the Abraham Lincoln Pillar of Excellence award by VA Secretary Eric Shineski at a White House ceremony. In presenting the award, the Secretary stated that he encourages all states to pursue similar outreach efforts on behalf of their respective veteran communities. I am and will always be available to those of you that desire additional program information.

I so look forward to the day when Tom and I are able to announce the date and preparations for the 2015 PARIS Training Conference. It has been much too long since the last training and there is much ground to cover in 2015.

For those of you that plan to attend the upcoming NAMPI Conference, scheduled for early August in San Antonio, I will be presenting a session on both PARIS and the Medicaid Veteran related Program. I hope to see those of you planning to attend. In the meantime, keep in mind the offer for any suggestions/ideas and I/we look forward to seeing all of you.....well...soon!

American Health Lawyers Association
February 2014
Member Briefing
Fraud Waste and Abuse Practice Group, Compliance Committee
Summary of OIG's 2014 Work Plan.
Page 26

**Medicaid Information System Controls and Security
Controls to Prevent Improper Medicaid Payments**

OIG will review Medicaid claims to determine the extent to which state agencies have controls in place to identify claims associated with inactive or invalid National Provider Identifiers, including claims for services alleged to have been provided after the dates of the referring physicians' deaths. OIG will review duplicate payments made by states on behalf of Medicaid beneficiaries with multiple Medicaid identification numbers and identify states' procedures or other controls for preventing such payments. OIG will review Public Assistance Reporting Information System (PARIS) enrollment data and determine the extent to which states use PARIS to prevent improper Medicaid payments made on behalf of beneficiaries who are simultaneously enrolled in more than one state.

Excerpt from Texas Representative Joe Farias at <http://joefarias.com/articles/33>
2013-2014 Legislative Accomplishments
Posted on Jan 25, 2014

House bill 634

House bill 634, also passed by the Representative, verifies an offender's VA status in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) system by using data made available from the Public Assistance Reporting Information System (PARIS) through the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC). The PARIS was created to help veterans claim federal benefits they qualify for and help alleviate some of the financial burden placed on the state. By adding the TDCJ into the PARIS, the Texas Veterans Commission can more effectively reach out to veterans who have fallen on hard times.

Meet Your PARIS Board Members

In each newsletter, we are interviewing a PARIS Board member to give you a better understanding of who we are and where we come from. This article highlights Mark Zaleha, Fraud Control Specialist, ODJFS Bureau of Program Integrity.

Background:

I was born and raised in Wadsworth, Ohio, which is a community 35 miles south of Cleveland, Ohio. My mother was a nurse for 35 years and my father was a civil servant in employment services. I love sports and played everything competitively in school, except basketball. What can I say? I can't jump. As a senior in high school, I won best of show in the city wide art contest. After high school, being too smart for college, I traveled to Germany to learn to be a gold smith. When that dream did not materialize, I settled in with an American family who lived in Germany while working for the U.S. Military. I played nanny for 18 months to a six and an eight year old girl while their parents worked rotating shifts. In my spare time, I worked as a cook on a U.S. Military post and traveled around Europe. When I returned to the states, I met a lady who I could call my best friend. We got married after a five month engagement. I have been blessed with two children, who might qualify as the best kids a father ever had. I am so proud of them. I worked many jobs before settling in with a county public assistance agency as a fraud investigator. When I accepted the position, I had no idea what I was getting into. As an investigator, I was chased by dogs, lied to, cussed at, threatened and propositioned. I wondered what my second day of work was going to be like. After 14 years working for the county offices, I landed a job in the Fraud Control Section for the state department of job and family services.

How did you get involved with PARIS ?

In my 14 years with the state, I have worked on countless projects related to data exchange and program integrity. No one was willing to tackle PARIS in Ohio. I was asked to design a system to process PARIS data. I was invited to the national PARIS conference where I listened to all the wonderful ideas from a host of other states. Almost by accident, a team came together to create a subsystem within Ohio's public assistance eligibility system. We integrated many of the ideas we learned from the PARIS conference. Eight months later, Ohio had an information delivery and result providing data matching subsystem. Members of the PARIS Board of Directors took note of Ohio's progress working PARIS data. When a position opened on the PARIS Board of Directors, I was invited to apply and work with them. The members of the PARIS Board are some of the most wonderful people with which I have had the pleasure to work. They are dedicated to program integrity and to the promotion of PARIS, mostly because of the proven potential and success of PARIS. I am honored to work with the PARIS Board of Directors.

A few more questions to get to know Mark better:

If you had one word to describe yourself, what would it be?

Tigger

If you could live anywhere in the world for a year, where would it be?

Hawaii. It is the most beautiful place I have ever visited.

What are your hobbies?

I love to golf and being in the woods. I have seen things in the woods only God can make happen. And I think golf courses are beautiful places to get away from the daily grind.

What is the one thing people would not know about you when they first meet you?

I enjoy gardening and I love to cook. I like to share recipes with others.

If you could witness any event, past, present or future, what would it be?

Appomattox Court House, April 9, 1865, the meeting between Lee and Grant which signaled the end of the Civil war. The events of that day have shaped our Nation.



Amherst Times
 Poloncarz Notes 2013 Successes in Rooting out Welfare Waste, Fraud and Abuse
EC Social Services' Special Investigations Division Saves Millions, Recovers Overpayments
ERIE COUNTY, NY—

Erie County Executive Mark C. Poloncarz today noted that 2013 was a highly successful year for the Erie County Department of Social Services' Special Investigations Division ("SID"), which is mandated by New York State law to investigate and prosecute fraud involving social service programs. From January – November 2013, the Erie County SID had completed over 2,100 investigations, identified over \$3.9 million in fraud, and had collected over \$6.6 million in funds.

"The work of the Special Investigations Division is critical not only to eliminating waste, fraud, and abuse in the system, but also to keeping the system healthy and functioning for those who truly need it," **said Poloncarz.** "As Comptroller I spoke about the need to fight this waste, and since becoming County Executive we have had a special focus on it. Defrauding the system is a crime against all of us, and the perpetrators will be caught and prosecuted."

In 2013 the Special Investigations Division completed the following:

- ✦ 2,134 investigations completed
- ✦ 3,212 overgrants calculated
- ✦ \$3,953, 603 in fraud packages completed
- ✦ \$6,661,604 in funds collected
- ✦ 40 cases referred to and prosecuted by the Erie County District Attorney
- ✦ 505 cases closed due to PARIS with a cost avoidance of \$2,776,968

SID conducts investigations for Temporary Assistance, Food Stamps, Day Care, and Medicaid. The investigations include field work, document verification, collateral contacts and assets or resource reviews. Once fraud is determined, budgets are prepared and computed to determine overpayment of funds or over issuance of Food Stamps.

SID then prepares cases for civil recovery and fraud packages for collection or prosecution. Investigators provide oral and/or written testimony in criminal, civil, or administrative proceedings against persons accused of fraudulently receiving public assistance benefits. SID is also charged with the recovery of overpayments via recoupment, payment arrangements, judgments, or income execution.

Background:

WELFARE FRAUD: PREVENTION, PROSECUTION AND RECOVERY

Welfare Fraud is any intentional action which results in a recipient receiving benefits or payments to which they are not entitled. In an effort to prevent fraud, the Front End Detection [FEDS] Unit conducts investigations on applicants for temporary [public] assistance. These investigations include a number of verification activities, including visits to the applicant's home. They are designed to verify the basic facts on the application.

Rectifying welfare fraud after it's occurred involves the use of 3 strategies: criminal prosecution, administrative sanctions and restitution. If fraud is alleged after a case has been opened, a team of investigators work to detect the fraud and ultimately prosecute civilly or criminally those individuals who have defrauded the public benefit system. Any and all overextended benefits issued to ineligible recipients (intentionally or unintentionally) are pursued for collection via grant reduction, recoupment, judgments and income executions within the parameters of Social Service regulations and NYS

January 2014:

Computer Matching Act: OMB and Selected Agencies Need to Ensure Consistent Implementation:

GAO-14-44: GAO Highlights:

Excerpt from the GAO report ...Agencies use computer matching in a variety of ways to help ensure that federal benefits are distributed appropriately. For example, the National Directory of New Hires, established in 1996 under the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act, is used to match new-hire information from states with information from other states and federal programs to detect and prevent erroneous payments for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, unemployment insurance, Medicaid, and other benefit programs. In another example, according to the Chairman of the House Committee on Ways and Means,[Footnote 2] SSA collects prisoner data from states and local governments to identify incarcerated individuals who should not receive Supplemental Security Income benefits. The chairman stated that from 1997 to 2009 computer matching had helped SSA identify over 720,000 inmates who were improperly receiving benefits, contributing to billions of dollars in savings to the federal government. Due to the success of this program, prisoner data are now shared with child support enforcement and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance programs as well. Likewise, the chairman also reported that the **Public Assistance Reporting Information System was being used to match state enrollment data for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Medicaid, and child care programs with data from participating states and a selected group of federal databases to identify potentially inappropriate payments.** According to the Subcommittee on Human Resources of the House Committee on Ways and Means,[Footnote 3] the State of Colorado realized a return on investment of 4000 percent from using the system, and the state of New York annually saves an average of \$62 million through its participation in the system.