



CHILD WELFARE SERVICES IN OKLAHOMA

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When one mentions child welfare services one immediately thinks of the services provided for in the Federal and State Social Security Bills.

Although these services are extensive they are not the only services for children in Oklahoma.

Dependent children is one of the groups which the Federal Social Security board assists the states in caring for. Oklahoma made provisions for this group when it passed the Social Security Act, in the summer of 1936. Aid is allowed to children under 16 years of age who have lived in the state for one year or were born of a mother who was a resident of the state for a year immediately preceding the application, and who has been deprived of parental support or care by reason of death, continued absence from home, or physical and mental incapacity of the parent. The child must have no income of its own and must be living in the home of its father, mother, grandmother, brother, sister, uncle, or aunt and must be resident within the state at time of receiving relief¹. This act is administered by the county Assistance Board and is under the direct supervision of the state department of Public Welfare². The state plan is supervised by the Federal Social Security Board. The Federal government contributes one-third and the state two-thirds of the amount granted to each child. The sum cannot exceed \$18.00 for the first child and \$12.00 for each succeeding child. From the money available in the Oklahoma Assistance Fund 17 per cent is set aside for the payment of assistance to dependent children³.

Every county in the state participates in the program. There were 36,741 children who received aid between 6-1-36 and 6-30-37⁴. Child

1. Okla. Social Security Act, Sec. 4, Article d.
2. Ibid, Sec. 3.
3. Ibid, Sec. 22, article 4.
4. Unprinted report of the State Welfare Department.

Welfare Services were provided for in the Federal Social Security Act. Oklahoma also made some provisions for these services in its Social Security Bill. Its purpose is the establishing, extending and strengthening, especially in predominately rural areas, public welfare services for the care of homeless dependent and neglected children and children in danger of becoming delinquent¹. The service is administered in the counties, by a child welfare director, appointed by the State Director of Child Welfare, who is a member of the staff of State Commission of Public Welfare². The Child Welfare Department is supervised by the Federal Childrens Bureau, who approve all personnel. The Federal government appropriated \$1,500,000 and grants to each state \$10,000 with an additional amount, not to exceed such part of the remainder as the rural population of such state bears to the total rural population of the U. S. Oklahoma received \$24,398.76 for 1937. The Oklahoma Social Security Act allowed ½ of 1 per cent for the payment of salaries, aid, and expenses necessary for the Child Welfare Division³. The county government must furnish office space, supplies, stenographic help and material relief to the children. Eleven counties are participating in this program. The counties are Grady, Canadian, Washington, Pontotoc, Kay, Ottawa, and the five county areas where the Health Department Indian Service, and the children's Bureau participate in the same program. These counties are Adair, Sequoyah, Cherokee, Mayes and Delaware.

Widows' Pensions were provided for in Oklahoma by legislation passed April 1, 1915, as an emergency measure. The act provides for the partial support of resident indigent women whose husbands are dead, in a hospital for the insane, or a prisoner in any state institution, where such women are mothers of children under 14 years of age⁴. The law is ad-

1. Federal Social Security Act, Sec. 521.
2. Okla. S. S. Act, Sec. 16.
3. Ibid, Sec. 22, Article 5.
4. Okla. Statutes, 1931, Sec. 7598.

ministered by the County Judge, who may not allow more than \$10.00 for the first child and \$5.00 for each succeeding child. If the fund is insufficient the judge selects the most urgent cases¹. Such allowances shall be made only where the child or children are living with the mother who is a proper person, morally, physically, and mentally for the bringing up of her children². The county commissioners must provide an amount not to exceed \$8,000 for each county³.

There are two state orphanages for white children. One, the Whitaker Orphans' Home located at Pryor, was established 3-15-10⁴. The West Oklahoma home, located at Helena was established 3-26-17⁵. The orphanage for colored children and the school for the colored blind and deaf was established 3-27-09⁶. These homes are temporary homes for dependent and neglected children under 16 years of age where they shall be retained only until they can be suitably placed in family homes. They may be retained until they are 18 years of age or until they are declared self-supporting⁷. On October 1, 1936 there were 575 children under the care of the two white orphanages. The Whitaker Home placed 91 out on contract and adopted out 35⁸. The homes are governed jointly by the State Board of Affairs and the State Board of Education⁹. The legislature appropriated \$570,533.00 for these three institutions for the two years immediately preceding 6-30-39. At least one member of the Board of Managers must visit each institution quarterly and report to the governor after each visit¹⁰.

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| 1. Okla. Statutes, 1931. Sec. 7602. | 6. Ibid, Sec. 5249. |
| 2. Ibid. Sec. 7600. | 7. Ibid, Sec. 5200, 5197. |
| 3. Ibid, Sec. 7598. | 8. Unpublished report of Whitaker Home. |
| 4. Okla. Statutes, 1931, Sec. 5797. | 9. Okla. Statutes 1931. Sec. 5216. |
| 5. Ibid, Sec. 5216. | 10. Ibid, Sec. 5149. |

Delinquent children come under the jurisdiction of the County Judge¹. He may commit such children to a suitable state institution or to the care of some reputable citizen, school or association². The state maintains four institutions for delinquent children—The State Training School for White Boys located at Pauls Valley, was established 3-11-09³. The Training School for Negro Boys located at Boley was established 3-28-25⁴. These institutions accept boys from 10 to 16 years of age and may retain them until 21 years. The Industrial School for white girls located at Tecumseh, was established 3-22-17. The one for negro girls located at Taft was established 3-27-09⁶. They accept girls from 8 to 16 years of age and retain them until 18 years of age⁷. In 1935 there were 2,075 juvenile delinquents brought before the county courts. Of these 1,194 were paroled to parents or relatives, and 881 were placed in institutions. These institutions are under the control of the State Board of Affairs, and the governor. The governor appoints the Superintendent of the School at Tecumseh⁸. The legislature appropriated \$670,644.94 for the two-year period immediately preceding 6-30-39.

Hospital care is provided for any indigent resident child under 21 years of age, afflicted with some deformity or suffering from some malady

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| 1. Okla. Statutes, 1931, Sec. 1730. | 5. Ibid, Sec. 5196. |
| 2. Ibid, Sec. 1737. | 6. Ibid, Sec. 5245. |
| 3. Ibid, Sec. 5154. | 7. Ibid, Sec. 5792. |
| 4. Ibid, Sec. 5233. | 8. Ibid, Sec. 5167. |

which can probably be cured or remedied by treatment in a hospital¹. The Federal Social Security Act appropriates money. These services are administered by the Oklahoma State Commissioner of Health, the State Superintendent of Schools and the Dean of the Medical School. The Secretary of the Commission is appointed by the President of the Univer-

sity². Application for care is made through the county judge of each county³. It is mandatory that the county commissioners in each county make a 1/10 mill levy on the assessed valuation in that county, proceeds of which shall be kept in a separate crippled children's fund⁴. The hospital for Crippled children was established in 1927. \$507,700 was appropriated for its maintenance for the two year period preceding 6-20-39. The Federal Social Security Board granted \$20,000 to each state and the remainder of \$2,850,000 is allotted to the state according to need⁵. Oklahoma received \$61,825 for 1937, for the purpose of enabling each state to extend and improve, especially in rural areas and areas suffering from severe economic distress, its services for locating crippled children, and for providing medical, surgical, corrective, and other services and care, and facilities for diagnosis, hospitalization, and aftercare for children who are crippled or who are suffering from conditions which lead to crippling⁶. The Oklahoma Social Security Act grants ½ of 1 per cent of the moneys available in the State Assistance Fund for crippled children⁶. Every hospital accepting crippled children must file a report with the Crippled Children's Commission⁷. The State Services are under the supervision of Federal Children Bureau to a certain extent.

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| 1. Okla. Statutes, 1931, Sec. 1748 as amended by Senate Bill No. 15, 1935. | |
| 2. <i>Ibid.</i> , Sec. 1748. | 5. Federal Social Security Bill, Sec. 511, 512. |
| 3. <i>Ibid.</i> , Sec. 1748. | 6. Okla. S. S. Bill, Sec. 4, Art. C. Sec. 22, Art. 3. |
| 4. <i>Ibid.</i> , Sec. 1751. | 7. Okla. Statutes, 1931, Sec. 1750. |

The State Schools for the Blind, located at Muskogee was established 3-13-13¹. The school for the deaf located at Sulphur, was established 4-14-08². A state school for colored blind, and deaf, and orphans is located at Taft³. Any child so blind or deaf that it cannot be educated in regular schools, may be admitted to these schools. Attendance for the blind is permissible from 6 to 21 years of age⁴. For the deaf, it is 7 to 21 years. The management of these institutions is vested in the State Superintendent of Public Instruction⁵. The governor appoints the superintendent⁶. \$526,469.07 was appropriated by the legislature for the maintenance of the schools for white children for the two-year period preceding 6-30-39. If the parents or guardians are unable to provide clothing, transportation, and care during the vacation period the county of residence must provide it⁷. The Superintendent must make a report to the legislature, 10 days before its regular meeting or when requested by the governor. No inspection or supervision is required.

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| 1. Okla. Statutes, 1931, Sec. 5268. | 5. <i>Ibid.</i> , Sec. 5270. |
| 2. <i>Ibid.</i> , Sec. 5265. | 6. <i>Ibid.</i> , Sec. 5258. |
| 3. <i>Ibid.</i> , Sec. 5249. | 7. <i>Ibid.</i> , Sec. 5264. |
| 4. <i>Ibid.</i> , Sec. 5271, 3a-5267? | |

The School for Feeble-minded is located at Enid. It was established 3-27-09¹. The purpose of the institution is to care for, support, train and instruct feeble minded children from 5 to 16 years, and epileptics, if there is room for them and until a separate home is built². The legislature appropriated \$378,782 for maintenance for the two-year period preceding 6-30-39. If the parents or guardians are able they provide clothing and transportation, otherwise the County Commissioners of the county of residence provide them³. It is under the control of the State Board of Affairs⁴. The Superintendent must report to the Commissioner of Charities and Corrections⁵.

The State Commissioner of Charities and Corrections has the right to visit, inspect, and inquire into the conditions and management of all maternity homes, hospitals, infirmaries, dispensaries, retreats, lying-in-

hospitals, orphanages, rescue and founding homes, and organizations for the adoption of children, and, if approved by him, to issue yearly certificates for their operation⁶. He may appear as next friend for all minor orphans, defectives, dependent, and delinquents who are inmates of any state institution⁷.

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| 1. Okla. Statutes, 1931, Sec. 5118. | 5. Ibid, Sec. 3611. |
| 2. Ibid, Sec. 5122. | 6. Ibid, Sec. 3606. |
| 3. Ibid, Sec. 5134-5135. | 7. Ibid, Sec. 3616. |
| 4. Ibid, 5119. | |

A Board of Public Welfare was established in 1935 and provides funds to be used for food, clothing, fuel, medical and surgical care, and other necessary supplies for destitute unemployable citizens who have lived in Oklahoma for one year¹. Children within family groups may be helped under this act. Children may be admitted to the State Sanatorium for T. B. at Tahihini. Requests for admission are made to the Sanatorium². It is controlled by State Board of Affairs, and State Board of Health³.

Maternal and Child Health services were also provided for in the Federal Social Security Act. Money was appropriated for the purpose of enabling each state to extend and improve, as far as practicable under the conditions in such state, services for promoting the health of mother and children especially in rural areas and in areas suffering from severe economic distress. This service is administered through the State Department of Health. \$64,333.76 were granted to Oklahoma by the Federal government for use in 1937⁴.

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1. Okla. Session Laws, 1935, Art. 17, Sec. 4.
 2. Okla. Statutes, 1931, Sec. 5290.
 3. Ibid, Sec. 5277.
 4. Federal Social Security Act. Title V. Section 501.

