

PRESS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May Is Public Assistance Fraud Awareness Month

CELINA, OHIO – May is Public Assistance Fraud Awareness Month in Ohio, and the Mercer County Job and Family Services is spreading the word that “Fraud Costs All of Us”

In 2016, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services disbursed about \$2.4 billion in SNAP food assistance, \$237 million in Ohio Works First cash assistance and \$617 million in child care provider subsidies. Individuals who mislead caseworkers or lie on an application for benefits account for a very small percentage of the funding disbursed, but the department takes even the smallest fraud cases very seriously.

Applicants and recipients of public assistance programs are encouraged to report their circumstances accurately and timely in order to avoid facing potential criminal charges, program disqualification and repayment of benefits issued improperly. Residents of Mercer County may report suspected public assistance fraud by calling the Mercer County Job and Family Services at 419-586-5106 option 5, option 1, Robin.Springer@jfs.ohio.gov, or going to jfs.ohio.gov/fraud.