

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
PENSION SURVEY COMMISSION

REPORT No. 5

STATE CARE
OF DEPENDENT CHILDREN
IN NEW JERSEY

April, 1932

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

To the Governor, Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:

The Pension Survey Commission submits herewith its fifth and final report on the assignments given it by the 1930 and 1931 sessions of the Legislature.

These assignments have carried the commission into varied fields and have involved comprehensive, technical studies. One survey laid the foundation for the present plan of old age relief. Another assembled data on public relief expenditures throughout the state. Another was an actuarial analysis of the 152 pension funds for public employees in New Jersey. Out of this analysis grew a legislative program for placing all public employee pensions on a sound financial basis.

In this final survey the state care of dependent children has been studied. The inquiry has had to do primarily with the causes of the rapid growth in child dependency cases in New Jersey and expenditures therefore. The historical development of the state program has been reviewed. Field investigations have provided information on local procedures and problems. Experience of other states in caring for dependent children has been ascertained.

The findings of the commission are summarized briefly in the accompanying report. Also included are the commission's recommendations for changes in certain provisions in the child dependency laws.

These recommendations have been embodied in Assembly bills 463, 464, 465, 466 and 467 introduced March 15, 1932, and in the amendments to these bills presented by the commission to the

Assembly committee on judiciary, April 11. In brief, the commission program would seek to:

Limit the number of dependent children transferred to state care by establishing specific standards of eligibility.

Place under the direction of the State Board of Children's Guardians all investigations of eligibility.

Provide for greater participation by a representative of the board of freeholders in the review of a child's eligibility for county relief.

Adjust amounts of relief grants more closely to differences in family need and local living costs by placing all aid under the Home Life Act on a budget basis.

Facilitate the court handling of cases in which a transfer of legal guardianship is not involved by permitting delegation of increased powers to a court referee.

The commission believes that the carrying out of this program is of vital importance to dependent children and taxpayers of New Jersey.

In submitting this final report, the commission wishes to express again its appreciation of the services of its counsel, Henry A. Williams, and its research director, Dr. Emma A. Winslow, who have been associated with the work of the commission since its establishment.

For certain phases of the child dependency study, the commission was fortunate in having the assistance of Mary Ruth Colby and Sarah H. Spencer, both of whom have had wide administrative and research experience in the public care of dependent children. In the compilation of the report, these members of the research staff of the commission have also assisted: Richard F. Burnett, Arthur Cornelius, Jr., Douglas H. MacNeil and Frances R. Rice.

The commission desires to express formally at this time its appreciation of the active co-operation given by members and staff of the State Board of Children's Guardians. Much assistance also has been received from public officials and social service executives.

Members of the commission wish to take this opportunity also to reaffirm their belief in the value of the legislative programs that have emanated from this commission's studies. It is the sincere hope of the commission that the people of New Jersey may be given the benefit of all these programs through their enactment into law.

Respectfully,

CHARLES BASILE

Acting Chairman

WILLIAM J. ELLIS

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Members of the State

Pension Survey Commission

1060 Broad Street,
Newark, New Jersey,
April 14, 1932.

STATE CARE OF DEPENDENT CHILDREN IN NEW JERSEY

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. Historical Development	9
II. Increase in Children under Care	17
III. Expenditures	27
IV. Eligibility Requirements	35
V. Relief Grants	45
VI. Administration	51
Appendix—	
Commission Revision of Home Life Act with Commission Amendments	59

STATE CARE OF DEPENDENT CHILDREN IN NEW JERSEY

CHAPTER I.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

New Jersey's present plan for state care of dependent children has developed from legislation enacted in 1899. This legislation grew from the studies of a special commission appointed by the Governor to determine the best methods of caring for defective, delinquent, and dependent children.

Previously children in need of public aid because of the death, desertion or inability of parents to support were committed to almshouses. Here many children remained indefinitely, with inadequate attention given to their physical well-being and educational development.

An almshouse official could place a child on indenture, however, for free care outside the almshouse. The person receiving such a child pledged himself "to find and provide good and sufficient clothing, board and lodging, and all other things necessary and proper for said child, and cause him to be taught to read and write, and in addition thereto, give him at least one quarter's teaching in arithmetic." At the expiration of the term of indenture, he was "to find and provide for the child, besides good and sufficient working clothes, one new suit of good Sunday clothing, including therein a good cloak or overcoat." During the first week in each April a written report on the health and condition of the child was to be made to the director of the board of chosen freeholders.

This early commission made a study of 523 children indentured between 1882 and 1898 by the warden of the Hudson County Almshouse. Fifty-four of these children were less than three years old when sent out from the almshouse. The average age

was about ten years for the boys and nine years for the girls. No investigation was made of the type of home maintained by a person applying for a child. Few written reports as to the child's condition had been received by local officials, nor was there a record of any attempt within twenty years to enforce the standards of child care specified in the indenture papers.

Because of the lack of investigation and supervision, the whereabouts of many children was entirely unknown to the public officials legally responsible for their care. Home visits by almshouse officials in Hudson County showed that in certain instances a false address had been used in the application blank and there was no way of tracing what had become of the child after it had been taken from the almshouse. A group of boys indentured over several years to men working on the New Jersey race tracks left the state when the race tracks were closed, and also were completely lost. Certain families claimed never to have received the children for whom indenture papers had been signed. Some children who ran away from the homes in which they were placed had never been located.

In 1898 there were 445 children in twenty-two county and municipal almshouses throughout the State. Of these children, 252 were in the Hudson County almshouse. Forty were in the Paterson almshouse, thirty-one in the Burlington County institution, twenty at Elizabeth, eighteen at Camden County, seventeen in Cumberland County and fifteen in Sussex County.

In Essex County, with its large population, there were only ten children in almshouses. It was found in the investigation that this was due to the work of local private agencies and institutions in caring for dependent children who would otherwise become public charges.

In Mercer and Morris Counties public officials were caring for dependent children by placement in private charitable institutions. In these two counties there were, therefore, no children in almshouses and also no indentures by almshouse officials. In Essex County, as noted above, public care of dependent children was very small in volume.

Origin of State Board

The desirability of lessening political control over dependent children by placing administrative responsibility for their care in the hands of a small unsalaried board of public-spirited citizens impressed these early investigators. A board of children's guardians since 1892 had supervised the care of dependent and delinquent children in the District of Columbia. County boards of guardians were being established in Indiana, and plans for the development of state or local boards were under consideration in Illinois and elsewhere.

Consequently, the 1898 and 1899 reports prepared the way for the establishment of a state board of children's guardians in New Jersey. Salaries and administrative expenditures of the board were to be financed from state funds. Funds for the education, maintenance and support of children committed to its care were to be a mandatory item in county and municipal budgets. Total or partial financing of relief grants from state funds was considered inadvisable because such a policy might stimulate unnecessary commitment of children as a means of lessening local relief expenditures.

The investigating commission of 1898-1899 firmly believed that the transfer of guardianship to the state board was an important means of safeguarding the interests of children under care and also of preventing commitments when temporary care only was needed. The 1898 report said:

"All persons who are experienced in the care of dependent children recognize the danger of indirectly encouraging the temporary or permanent abandonment of children by their parents. Even the most rigid investigation will not always prevent this evil, unless a rule be made that when relatives give up a child to be a dependent, they must give up all title to it. Experience shows that it has a bad effect on parents to relieve them of the care of the children for a time, and that they frequently spoil the life of the child by taking it home when they think it is old enough to be of service. Whenever a law has been passed providing that guardianship of dependent children shall be vested in the State, or in boards of children's guardians, there has been a large diminution in the

number of dependent children. We have reason to believe that New Jersey will prove no exception to this rule, and that a rigid investigation would relieve the almshouses of a great many of the children who are now public charges."

Type of Care to be Provided

Any state program in New Jersey which would lead to the continued institutional care of dependent children was uniformly opposed in the reports of this early commission.

There was to be no statewide plan for the erection and maintenance of county institutions for children as in Ohio or for subsidies to private institutions as in New York. While the lack of facilities for the temporary care of dependent children in certain parts of the State made it seem inadvisable to forbid commitments of children to almshouses, such commitment was to place a child immediately under the care of the state board with requirement that the board remove the child from the almshouse within a specified time.

The New Jersey program of child care was to have as its goal the suitable placement of all dependent children in family homes. Indenture of children by county and municipal officials was to be terminated.

The function of the state board would be "to place children in private families at the expense of the county, city, township, borough or other municipality from which they are taken. They are to be placed in families holding the same religious faith as their parents, and ample safeguards will be provided for the protection of the child, its education, etc., by a system of constant oversight and visitation. When necessary, board will be paid for the child. When possible and advisable, a free home will be found for it."

While similar boards elsewhere had been given broad powers in the care of defective and delinquent children, this was not recommended for New Jersey. It was felt the needs of these groups were being satisfactorily cared for by private and public agencies already in operation.

It also was recommended that no authority for the surrender of a child by the state board for adoption be given that body. All matters of adoption should be handled in accordance with court procedures already established, the investigators held.

Early Operation

Recommendations of the 1898-1899 commission were followed closely in the enactment of the law creating the state board (Chapter 165, P. L. 1899) and the amendments passed three years later for the strengthening of certain provisions (Chapter 160, P. L. 1902).

While the New Jersey program was widely acclaimed for its fundamental soundness in the care of dependent children, the early years of its development were fraught with many difficulties. The 1899 session of the Legislature was willing to authorize the establishment of a state board with powers as outlined, but there was no appropriation for its expenses until the following year. This and succeeding appropriations were small in comparison with the need for improvement in dependent child care in New Jersey.

County and municipal officials were unaccustomed to state control of any phase of local relief work. They often resented having children boarded in family homes under state supervision instead of being cared for in almshouses or under the earlier plan of indenture by almshouse officials.

The state board's work expanded rapidly. Its agent, who also had served as secretary of the commission which recommended the board's establishment, devoted her attention in the beginning to the removal of dependent children from almshouses and arranging for their placement in family homes. Because of the large number of children under public care in Hudson County, headquarters of the board were established in Jersey City. Much of the early work of the board was done in that vicinity.

Mother's Aid Program

It soon became apparent that a considerable proportion of the children in almshouses throughout the state had relatives who could afford to care for the children if paid the equivalent of the

cost of the child's care in a foster home or institution. It was also found that many children were needlessly sent to almshouses. The services of the state board came to be frequently requested by public officials and executives of private agencies where problems of child care formed an important part of a family relief situation.

The board became increasingly interested in keeping dependent children in their own family groups whenever this could be arranged. In 1910 the Attorney-General ruled that the payment of board to mothers for the care of their children was possible under the provisions of the 1899 law establishing the state board.

In 1913 a far-reaching expansion in the powers and duties of the board resulted from the passage by the Legislature of the Act to Promote Home Life for Dependent Children, (Chapter 281, P. L. 1913).

For years there had been widespread agitation in the United States for the enactment of widow's pension legislation. The backers of the movement were opposed to the administration of such aid by public poor departments because of the supposed charity taint which might result. The plan adopted in Illinois and advocated in other states provided for the granting and administration of widow's pensions as a court responsibility, and this was proposed in the bill introduced in New Jersey.

Because of the relief work with children in widow's families being carried by the state board it was agreed that it would be advisable to give the board responsibility for the investigation of widow's pension applications. Also the board was to have supervision of grants authorized by the court.

All dependent children under the care of the state board prior to this had been committed to the board by municipal overseers of the poor or wardens of county almshouses. The need for state care was supposedly determined before the child was committed. The board's responsibilities related mainly to the placement of children in foster homes or institutions or their continued relief and supervision in the family home.

As all children became the legal wards of the board on commitment, the board had final decision as to where a child should be placed, whether free or boarding care was to be provided, the

amount and kind of clothing and medical care needed, and the discharge of the child to the custody of a parent or guardian if this seemed advisable.

In many respects the administration of aid under the Home Life Act was to be different from that in force for the state care of dependent children. Eligibility for relief was defined in detail in the act. The state board was required to verify the accuracy of the claims of all petitioners and make a report to the court. A maximum grant per child was fixed by law. The court, rather than the state board decided if the maximum or a smaller amount was to be given. All aid was in the form of a monthly cash payment, and not partly in cash and partly in clothing and medical care. A relief grant could be discontinued only by court order. Children aided under this act remained in the legal custody of their mother or guardian. Six supervisory visits a year were required in comparison with the specified quarterly visits to children under commitment to the board for dependency.

Additional Legislation

In 1915 was passed the Act concerning the Welfare of Children (Chapter 246, P. L. 1915). This made possible the court commitment of children to the state board upon a finding of abuse, abandonment, cruelty, neglect, unfit guardianship, or failure of parents to provide. It is assumed in the law that the need has been determined before commitment. The state board's responsibility, therefore, relates primarily to the relief and protection of children already proven to require their care. All children committed under this act become the legal wards of the board. The plan of relief grants is the same as for children committed by public poor officials.

Another important step came in 1918 with the enactment of Chapter 147, P. L. 1918, establishing the State Board of Control of Institutions and Agencies. Previously the work of the State Board of Children's Guardians was not legally connected with other state agencies. The placing of all public welfare agencies and institutions under the same supervisory control ended the administrative isolation of the guardians board, and gave it the benefit of close association with the programs of other state welfare groups.

While the manner of board appointments and departmental relationships were changed by this law, the powers and duties of the state board were changed only in minor points.

Certain responsibilities were given to the state board by Chapter 90, P. L. 1922, with reference to the guardianship of children whose mothers had been committed to an institution under the supervision of the Department of Institutions and Agencies. Changes were made in the legal settlement requirements and the overseer's handling of dependency commitments by the 1924 revision of the Poor Law (Chapter 132, P. L. 1924). The court handling of commitments under the Child Welfare Act was made more explicit in a number of respects by the 1929 Juvenile Court Law (Chapter 157, P. L. 1929).

Organization Readjustments

Recent changes in the child dependency program have been mainly in internal administration.

The United States Children's Bureau made a comprehensive study of the state board's work.* Another survey was made in 1929 by Mary F. Bogue, formerly in charge of the Mothers' Aid Department of the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare. Both of these studies resulted in various changes in procedure.

In October, 1930, the office of the state board was moved from Jersey City to Trenton. At the same time the decentralization of services through the establishment of district offices was begun. A district office for Hudson County was opened in Jersey City, a district office for Essex County was established in Newark and one for Monmouth and Ocean Counties in Red Bank. More recently district offices have been established in Camden for seven southern counties, in Morris County for Morris, Sussex, Warren and Hunterdon Counties, and in Paterson for Bergen and Passaic Counties.

Higher qualifications for investigators have been prescribed in recent years by the State Civil Service Commission. The clothing department has been reorganized to provide for wholesale purchases. Formerly clothing was bought at retail prices. Health and other special services for the children under care have been developed.

*United States Children's Bureau Publication, No. 175, Child Welfare in New Jersey, Part 2, State Provision for Dependent Children. 1927.

CHAPTER II.

INCREASE IN CHILDREN UNDER CARE

Under the New Jersey program of state care for dependent children there has been a steadily increasing growth in the number of children transferred from local to state supervision. During the earlier years this growth was due in part to new responsibilities placed upon the State Board of Children's Guardians by legislative enactment. More recently it has been caused entirely by the increasingly large number of commitments by local officials under provisions long on the statute books.

Studies of the Pension Survey Commission show that the number of dependent children under state care in New Jersey multiplied nearly three and one-half times between 1921 and 1931, and a still further increase is indicated in 1932.

This rate of increase is far in excess of the population growth since 1921. While the upward trend in the volume of dependency cases has been accentuated during the recent years of economic depression, it was strongly noticeable during the preceding years of widespread economic prosperity.

As shown in Table 1, there were 7,920 dependent children un-

TABLE 1
CHILDREN UNDER CARE, 1921-1931

Year	—Number Under Care June 30—			—Per 10,000 Population—		
	Total	Home Life	Dependency	Total	Home Life	Dependency
1921.....	7,920	5,428	2,492	24.4	16.7	7.7
1922.....	9,029	6,056	2,973	27.1	18.2	8.9
1923.....	9,686	6,156	3,530	28.3	18.0	10.3
1924.....	10,778	6,791	3,987	30.7	19.3	11.4
1925.....	11,864	7,224	4,640	33.0	20.1	12.9
1926.....	13,321	7,804	5,517	36.2	21.2	15.0
1927.....	14,898	8,598	6,300	39.4	22.8	16.6
1928.....	16,670	8,838	7,832	43.0	22.8	20.2
1929.....	18,789	9,686	9,103	47.2	24.2	23.0
1930.....	21,884	10,625	11,259	54.2	26.3	27.9
1931.....	27,275	13,031	14,244	66.0	31.6	34.4

TABLE 2

CHILDREN UNDER CARE BY COUNTY OF COMMITMENT,
1921, 1926 AND 1931

(Counties arranged in order of population, 1930 Census)

	Number Under Care June 30			Per 10,000 Population		
	1921	1926	1931	1921	1926	1931
TOTAL CHILDREN	7,920	13,321	27,275	24.4	36.2	65.7
Home Life	5,428	7,804	13,031	16.7	21.2	31.4
Dependency	2,492	5,517	14,244	7.7	15.0	34.3
1. <i>Essex: Total</i>	1,679	3,345	7,298	25.0	44.0	85.3
Home Life	1,148	1,648	2,495	17.1	21.7	29.2
Dependency	531	1,697	4,803	7.9	22.3	56.1
2. <i>Hudson: Total</i>	2,388	4,188	7,675	37.5	62.9	110.0
Home Life	1,001	1,756	2,770	15.7	26.4	39.8
Dependency	1,387	2,432	4,905	21.8	36.5	70.2
3. <i>Bergen: Total</i>	357	489	1,376	15.8	16.1	35.9
Home Life	334	337	645	14.8	11.1	16.8
Dependency	23	152	731	1.0	5.0	19.1
4. <i>Union: Total</i>	306	523	1,193	14.5	19.8	37.5
Home Life	267	464	947	12.7	17.6	29.8
Dependency	39	59	246	1.8	2.2	7.7
5. <i>Passaic: Total</i>	438	646	1,378	16.6	22.7	44.8
Home Life	372	456	845	14.1	16.0	27.5
Dependency	66	190	533	2.5	6.7	17.3
6. <i>Camden: Total</i>	329	613	1,456	16.7	26.9	56.0
Home Life	300	490	838	15.2	21.5	32.2
Dependency	29	123	618	1.5	5.4	23.8
7. <i>Middlesex: Total</i>	560	807	1,187	33.4	42.0	54.4
Home Life	501	686	1,002	29.9	35.7	45.9
Dependency	59	121	185	3.5	6.3	8.5
8. <i>Mercer: Total</i>	438	496	1,164	26.9	28.2	61.1
Home Life	397	421	923	24.4	23.9	48.4
Dependency	41	75	241	2.5	4.3	12.7
9. <i>Monmouth: Total</i>	364	589	931	33.4	45.2	61.1
Home Life	277	343	560	25.4	26.3	36.8
Dependency	87	246	371	8.0	18.9	24.3
10. <i>Atlantic: Total</i>	139	200	492	15.8	18.4	37.9
Home Life	133	176	287	15.1	16.2	22.1
Dependency	6	24	205	0.7	2.2	15.8

TABLE 2—*Continued*

CHILDREN UNDER CARE BY COUNTY OF COMMITMENT,
1921, 1926 AND 1931

(Counties arranged in order of population, 1930 Census)

	Number Under Care June 30			Per 10,000 Population		
	1921	1926	1931	1921	1926	1931
11. <i>Morris: Total</i>	283	343	513	33.1	34.5	45.1
Home Life	249	249	336	29.1	25.0	29.6
Dependency	34	94	177	4.0	9.5	15.5
12. <i>Burlington: Total</i>	128	256	509	15.4	28.8	53.6
Home Life	87	193	284	10.5	21.6	29.9
Dependency	41	63	225	4.9	7.2	23.7
13. <i>Gloucester: Total</i>	60	76	191	11.9	12.2	26.0
Home Life	49	64	153	9.7	10.3	20.8
Dependency	11	12	38	2.2	1.9	5.2
14. <i>Cumberland: Total</i>	77	166	369	12.4	25.0	52.0
Home Life	48	113	178	7.7	17.0	25.1
Dependency	29	53	191	4.7	8.0	26.9
15. <i>Somerset: Total</i>	82	117	340	16.5	20.0	50.6
Home Life	76	112	185	15.3	19.2	27.5
Dependency	6	5	155	1.2	0.8	23.1
16. <i>Warren: Total</i>	61	106	433	13.4	22.3	86.9
Home Life	40	69	169	8.8	14.5	33.9
Dependency	21	37	264	4.6	7.8	53.0
17. <i>Salem: Total</i>	35	71	142	9.6	19.3	38.5
Home Life	19	51	62	5.2	13.9	16.8
Dependency	16	20	80	4.4	5.4	21.7
18. <i>Hunterdon: Total</i>	41	71	111	12.4	20.8	31.7
Home Life	37	63	94	11.1	18.5	26.9
Dependency	4	8	17	1.3	2.3	4.8
19. <i>Ocean: Total</i>	41	47	155	17.6	16.4	45.1
Home Life	36	32	102	15.5	11.1	29.7
Dependency	5	15	53	2.1	5.3	15.4
20. <i>Cape May: Total</i>	27	65	147	13.2	25.5	47.9
Home Life	16	39	74	7.8	15.3	24.1
Dependency	11	26	73	5.4	10.2	23.8
21. <i>Sussex: Total</i>	87	107	215	34.5	40.1	76.3
Home Life	41	42	82	16.2	15.7	29.1
Dependency	46	65	133	18.3	24.4	47.2

der state care June 30, 1921. The same date in 1931 there were 27,275. For every 10,000 persons in the population, twenty-four children were aided in 1921; sixty-six in 1931.

The increase has been especially marked, in the number of children committed for dependency by overseers of the poor and by the courts under other laws than the Act to Promote Home Life (Chapter 281, P. L. 1913).

Between 1921 and 1931 the children being cared for by the board under dependency commitments increased from 2,492 to 14,244, or approximately sixfold. The children being cared for in accordance with the provisions of the Home Life Act increased from 5,428 to 13,031, or slightly more than twice.

In 1921, less than one-third of the board's cases had been committed for dependency. In 1931, over one-half had been so committed.

The consistent tendency in all parts of the State toward increase in total cases, especially in those under dependency commitments, is shown in Table 2, where the figures are given separately for the counties with reference to cases under care June 30, 1921 and 1931, and the halfway year of 1926.

During the period studied, the number of children under care per 10,000 population increased over three times in Essex, Hudson, Camden, Cumberland, Somerset, Warren, Salem and Cape May counties. The increase was between two and three times in Bergen, Union, Passaic, Mercer, Monmouth, Atlantic, Burlington, Hunterdon and Ocean counties; between one and two times in Middlesex, Morris, Gloucester and Sussex counties.

New Commitments

As previously described, all children aided in accordance with the provisions of the Home Life Act come under the care of the state board through commitment by the judge of a juvenile court or court of common pleas. Those aided under dependency commitments are received either from the courts or from overseers of the poor.

Table 3 shows the number of court and overseer commitments year by year between 1921 and 1931. Within this period the number of new cases coming under the care of the board increased from 2,089 to 7,097. The proportion of court commitments has remained consistently at about four-fifths of the annual total and overseer commitments at about one-fifth. The proportion of court commitments under the Home Life Act has steadily decreased, however, and the court commitments under other laws have increased.

TABLE 3

COURT AND OVERSEER COMMITMENTS, 1921-1931

<i>Year Ending June 30 Number—</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Court</i>			<i>Overseer</i>
		<i>Total</i>	<i>Home Life</i>	<i>Dependency</i>	
1921.....	2,089	1,590	1,400	190	499
1922.....	2,676	2,149	1,847	302	527
1923.....	2,509	2,024	1,598	426	485
1924.....	3,001	2,469	2,019	450	532
1925.....	2,951	2,356	1,819	537	595
1926.....	3,640	2,832	2,218	614	808
1927.....	4,028	3,277	2,597	680	751
1928.....	4,613	3,591	2,400	1,191	1,022
1929.....	5,330	4,247	2,871	1,376	1,083
1930.....	6,092	4,791	3,243	1,548	1,301
1931.....	7,097	5,635	3,895	1,740	1,462
<i>Percentage—</i>					
1921.....	100.0	76.1	67.0	9.1	23.9
1922.....	100.0	80.3	69.0	11.3	19.7
1923.....	100.0	80.7	63.8	16.9	19.3
1924.....	100.0	82.3	67.3	15.0	17.7
1925.....	100.0	79.8	61.6	18.2	20.2
1926.....	100.0	77.8	60.9	16.9	22.2
1927.....	100.0	81.3	64.5	16.8	18.7
1928.....	100.0	77.8	52.0	25.8	22.2
1929.....	100.0	79.7	53.9	25.8	20.3
1930.....	100.0	78.6	53.2	25.4	21.4
1931.....	100.0	79.4	54.9	24.5	20.6

TABLE 4

COURT AND OVERSEER COMMITMENTS BY COUNTY,
1921, 1926 AND 1931

(Counties arranged in order of population, 1930 Census)

	Number During Year Ending June 30			Percentage		
	1921	1926	1931	1921	1926	1931
TOTAL COMMITMENTS	2,089	3,640	7,097	100.0	100.0	100.0
Court: Home Life	1,400	2,218	3,895	67.0	60.9	54.9
Dependency	190	614	1,740	9.1	16.9	24.5
Overseer	499	808	1,462	23.9	22.2	20.6
1. <i>Essex: Total</i>	387	882	1,870	100.0	100.0	100.0
Court: Home Life.....	263	491	818	67.9	55.6	43.7
Dependency	104	379	1,041	26.9	43.0	55.7
Overseer	20	12	11	5.2	1.4	0.6
2. <i>Hudson: Total</i>	705	1,203	1,845	100.0	100.0	100.0
Court: Home Life.....	272	612	808	38.6	50.8	43.8
Dependency	12	26	128	1.7	2.2	6.9
Overseer	421	565	909	59.7	47.0	49.3
3. <i>Bergen: Total</i>	72	179	456	100.0	100.0	100.0
Court: Home Life.....	55	80	242	76.4	44.7	53.1
Dependency	17	24	70	23.6	13.4	15.3
Overseer .....	....	75	144	....	41.9	31.6
4. <i>Union: Total</i>	68	150	364	100.0	100.0	100.0
Court: Home Life.....	68	132	287	100.0	88.0	78.9
Dependency .....	....	10	70	....	6.6	19.2
Overseer .....	....	8	7	....	5.4	1.9
5. <i>Passaic: Total</i>	97	132	368	100.0	100.0	100.0
Court: Home Life.....	80	115	266	82.5	87.2	72.3
Dependency .....	....	14	92	....	10.7	25.0
Overseer	17	3	10	17.5	2.1	2.7
6. <i>Camden: Total</i>	114	176	425	100.0	100.0	100.0
Court: Home Life.....	101	126	238	88.6	71.6	56.1
Dependency .....	....	3	9	....	1.7	2.0
Overseer	13	47	178	11.4	26.7	41.9
7. <i>Middlesex: Total</i>	133	139	240	100.0	100.0	100.0
Court: Home Life.....	130	101	219	98.0	73.0	92.0
Dependency .....	....	22	13	....	15.4	5.5
Overseer	3	16	8	2.0	11.6	3.0
8. <i>Mercer: Total</i>	138	131	227	100.0	100.0	100.0
Court: Home Life.....	134	120	167	98.0	92.0	73.6
Dependency	3	5	50	1.8	3.8	22.1
Overseer	1	6	10	0.2	4.2	4.3
9. <i>Monmouth: Total</i>	80	176	300	100.0	100.0	100.0
Court: Home Life.....	45	102	196	57.0	57.0	65.3
Dependency	34	74	104	42.0	43.0	34.7
Overseer	1	....	....	1.0	....	....
10. <i>Atlantic: Total</i>	29	46	106	100.0	100.0	100.0
Court: Home Life.....	28	26	89	96.6	57.0	83.9
Dependency .....	....	10	17	....	21.5	16.1
Overseer	1	10	....	3.4	21.5	....

TABLE 4—*Continued*

COURT AND OVERSEER COMMITMENTS BY COUNTY.

1921, 1926 AND 1931

(Counties arranged in order of population, 1930 Census)

	Number During Year Ending June 30			Percentage		
	1921	1926	1931	1921	1926	1931
11. <i>Morris: Total</i>	92	67	111	100.0	100.0	100.0
Court: Home Life.....	68	48	92	73.9	71.7	82.8
Dependency	19	19	19	20.7	28.3	17.2
Overseer	5	....	....	5.4	....	....
12. <i>Burlington: Total</i>	47	75	153	100.0	100.0	100.0
Court: Home Life.....	46	62	73	97.9	82.7	47.7
Dependency .....	....	4	31	....	5.3	20.2
Overseer	1	9	49	2.1	12.0	32.1
13. <i>Gloucester: Total</i>	19	33	72	100.0	100.0	100.0
Court: Home Life.....	16	27	64	84.3	81.9	88.8
Dependency .....	....	....	4	....	....	5.6
Overseer	3	6	4	15.7	18.1	5.6
14. <i>Cumberland: Total</i>	29	51	108	100.0	100.0	100.0
Court: Home Life.....	19	42	58	65.6	82.4	53.7
Dependency .....	....	7	34	....	13.8	31.4
Overseer	10	2	16	34.4	3.8	14.9
15. <i>Somerset: Total</i>	22	38	102	100.0	100.0	100.0
Court: Home Life.....	22	34	74	100.0	89.5	72.6
Dependency .....	....	4	27	....	10.5	26.4
Overseer .....	....	....	1	....	....	1.0
16. <i>Warren: Total</i>	11	50	144	100.0	100.0	100.0
Court: Home Life.....	11	29	69	100.0	58.1	47.9
Dependency .....	....	7	3	....	14.0	2.0
Overseer .....	....	14	72	....	27.9	50.1
17. <i>Salem: Total</i>	10	21	39	100.0	100.0	100.0
Court: Home Life.....	9	8	21	90.0	38.1	53.9
Dependency .....	....	....	1	....	....	2.5
Overseer	1	13	17	10.0	61.9	43.6
18. <i>Hunterdon: Total</i>	9	32	37	100.0	100.0	100.0
Court: Home Life.....	9	29	34	100.0	90.6	91.9
Dependency .....	....	3	3	....	9.4	8.1
Overseer .....	....	....	....	....	....	....
19. <i>Ocean: Total</i>	6	15	54	100.0	100.0	100.0*
Court: Home Life.....	5	15	40	83.3	100.0	74.0
Dependency	1	....	13	16.7	....	24.0
Overseer .....	....	....	1	....	....	2.0
20. <i>Cape May: Total</i>	3	12	30	100.0	100.0	100.0
Court: Home Life.....	3	3	22	100.0	25.0	73.3
Dependency .....	....	....	8	....	....	26.7
Overseer .....	....	9	....	....	75.0	....
21. <i>Sussex: Total</i>	18	32	45	100.0	100.0	100.0
Court: Home Life.....	16	16	18	88.9	50.0	40.0
Dependency .....	....	3	3	....	9.4	6.7
Overseer	2	13	24	11.1	40.6	53.3

As shown in Table 4, there were decided differences in the various counties in the relative increase and decrease in overseer and court commitments between 1921 and 1931, and also in the emphasis placed upon the two methods of transferring children to state care.

In Essex County nearly all commitments have been made throughout the period by court order. This is true also in Union, Passaic, Middlesex, Mercer, Monmouth, Atlantic, Morris, Somerset, Hunterdon and Cape May counties.

In Hudson, Camden, Warren, Salem and Sussex counties there have been very few court commitments, with the exception of those under the Home Life Act. In the other counties the proportion of court and overseer commitments is more evenly divided.

While there has been everywhere the strong tendency to commit more children to the state board, as reflected in the increased volume of children under care, the figures on commitment by counties reveal a marked lack of uniformity in the methods used throughout the State in arranging for the administration and financing of child dependency relief.

Boarding and Free Care

A significant change also has taken place during recent years in the proportion of children requiring both relief grants and supervisory care following commitment to the state board (See Table 5).

TABLE 5

DEPENDENT CHILDREN UNDER BOARDING AND FREE CARE, 1921-1931

Year	Number Under Care			Percentage		
	June 30					
	Total	Boarding	Free	Total	Boarding	Free
1921.....	2,492	1,492	1,000	100.0	59.9	40.1
1922.....	2,973	1,906	1,067	100.0	64.1	35.9
1923.....	3,530	2,297	1,233	100.0	65.1	34.9
1924.....	3,987	2,673	1,314	100.0	67.0	33.0
1925.....	4,640	3,127	1,513	100.0	67.4	32.6
1926.....	5,517	3,904	1,611	100.0	70.8	29.2
1927.....	6,300	4,391	1,909	100.0	69.7	30.3
1928.....	7,832	5,662	2,170	100.0	72.3	27.7
1929.....	9,103	6,920	2,183	100.0	76.0	24.0
1930.....	11,259	8,584	2,675	100.0	76.2	23.8
1931.....	14,244	10,789	3,455	100.0	75.7	24.3

While all services by the board to children in families aided under the Home Life Act relate to the period during which relief is given, this is not true in commitments under other laws.

Certain children are placed under the board's guardianship for protection against parental abuse or neglect, or because of juvenile delinquency, where the family economic situation is such that there is no need for public relief. A number of children lacking family homes of their own are placed each year for free care in suitable foster homes. While these children continue under the board's supervision, the cost of their maintenance is no longer a public charge. As guardianship lasts until a child is twenty-one, unless there is reason for an earlier discharge, many children originally committed for dependency are still legally under the care of the board although working and self-supporting.

On June 30, 1921, there were 1,000 children under the guardianship of the board for whom no payments were being made for

care in a family home or institution, although in certain instances clothing or medical care was being provided. On the same date in 1931, there were 3,455 children so aided, or about three and one-half times as many.

The increase in cases boarded at public expense during these years was from 1,492 to 10,789, or over seven times. The proportion of such cases was 59.9 per cent. of the total under dependency commitment in 1921 and 75.7 per cent. in 1931.

CHAPTER III

EXPENDITURES

The increase of children under state care in New Jersey has brought a corresponding increase in expenditures. Between 1921 and 1931 expenditures for this purpose increased about five and one-half times (See Table 6). In 1921 the state, counties and municipalities spent \$788,333.89. By 1931 this had mounted to \$4,339,149.19.

TABLE 6

STATE, COUNTY AND MUNICIPAL EXPENDITURES, 1921-1931

<i>Year Ending</i>	<i>County</i>				
<i>June 30</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>Home Life</i>	<i>Dependency</i>	<i>Municipal</i>
<i>Expenditures—</i>					
1921.....	\$ 788,333.89	\$ 92,893.22	\$ 390,746.17	\$ 244,180.51	\$60,513.99
1922.....	967,376.94	107,435.44	467,795.55	335,464.66	56,681.29
1923.....	1,154,419.72	111,156.38	562,658.18	416,560.21	64,044.95
1924.....	1,341,474.38	118,635.52	636,550.32	516,426.19	69,862.35
1925.....	1,499,646.94	126,373.62	712,417.44	591,173.24	69,682.64
1926.....	1,806,426.59	144,145.26	792,643.38	790,968.44	78,669.51
1927.....	2,055,892.45	167,630.00	871,601.67	942,824.30	73,836.48
1928.....	2,377,364.74	198,059.54	939,039.40	1,171,023.45	69,242.35
1929.....	2,922,151.21	204,901.17	1,178,417.92	1,466,815.59	72,016.53
1930.....	3,616,955.14	231,250.26	1,433,978.21	1,879,563.77	72,162.90
1931.....	4,339,149.19	262,633.34	1,752,306.85	2,250,991.28	73,217.72
<i>Percentage—</i>					
1922.....	100.0	11.8	49.5	31.0	7.7
1923.....	100.0	11.1	48.4	34.7	5.8
1924.....	100.0	9.6	48.7	36.1	5.6
1925.....	100.0	8.8	47.5	38.5	5.2
1926.....	100.0	8.4	47.5	39.4	4.7
1927.....	100.0	8.0	43.9	43.8	4.3
1928.....	100.0	8.2	42.4	45.8	3.6
1929.....	100.0	8.3	39.5	49.3	2.9
1930.....	100.0	7.0	40.3	50.2	2.5
1931.....	100.0	6.4	39.6	52.0	2.0
1931.....	100.0	6.0	40.4	51.9	1.7

Administrative costs of all work in behalf of dependent and neglected children are, as explained previously, from state funds. All relief grants are from county and municipal funds. The ex-

TABLE 7

COUNTY AND MUNICIPAL EXPENDITURES,

1921, 1926 and 1931

(Counties arranged in order of population, 1930 Census)

	Year ending June 30		
	1921	1926	1931
Total	\$695,440.67	\$1,662,281.33	\$4,076,515.85
County: Home Life	390,746.17	792,643.38	1,752,306.85
Dependency	244,180.51	190,968.44	2,250,991.28
Municipal	60,513.99	78,669.51	73,217.72
1. <i>Essex: Total</i>	154,800.27	459,531.43	1,186,052.49
County: Home Life	80,688.54	177,708.00	363,478.67
Dependency	40,477.82	251,646.46	803,700.33
Municipal	33,633.91	30,176.97	18,873.49
2. <i>Hudson: Total</i>	242,257.08	565,327.06	1,180,520.35
County: Home Life	73,754.04	173,522.11	390,641.27
Dependency	168,503.04	391,804.95	789,879.08
Municipal			
3. <i>Bergen: Total</i>	26,259.50	56,929.43	204,053.69
County: Home Life	24,402.70	34,167.71	84,542.68
Dependency	539.76	22,761.72	119,511.01
Municipal	1,317.04		
4. <i>Union: Total</i>	23,193.84	53,245.13	154,432.26
County: Home Life	19,271.34	45,707.92	116,878.76
Dependency	233.88	3,209.26	31,654.01
Municipal	3,688.62	4,327.95	5,899.49
5. <i>Passaic: Total</i>	33,778.63	77,775.81	204,176.20
County: Home Life	25,214.14	44,505.13	117,667.46
Dependency		7,715.97	57,625.99
Municipal	8,564.49	25,554.71	28,882.75
6. <i>Camden: Total</i>	26,409.06	64,964.00	207,880.67
County: Home Life	24,168.05	49,998.19	111,596.02
Dependency	2,241.01	14,965.81	95,937.80
Municipal			346.85
7. <i>Middlesex: Total</i>	42,664.69	89,184.64	141,828.71
County: Home Life	35,133.35	71,820.20	113,329.37
Dependency		4,731.82	15,799.60
Municipal	7,531.34	12,632.62	12,699.74
8. <i>Mercer: Total</i>	32,158.13	53,454.01	159,976.94
County: Home Life	26,748.35	41,679.42	123,634.65
Dependency	765.22	6,804.60	31,066.46
Municipal	4,644.56	4,969.99	5,275.83
9. <i>Monmouth: Total</i>	32,762.11	66,186.54	115,268.70
County: Home Life	21,001.51	34,621.97	65,714.78
Dependency	11,213.25	31,338.45	49,553.92
Municipal	547.35	226.12	
10. <i>Atlantic: Total</i>	9,839.11	20,942.59	79,500.43
County: Home Life	9,727.85	18,708.35	40,967.50
Dependency	111.26	2,234.24	38,532.93
Municipal			

TABLE 7—Continued

COUNTY AND MUNICIPAL EXPENDITURES,

1921, 1926 and 1931

(Counties arranged in order of population, 1930 Census)

	Year ending June 30		
	1921	1926	1931
11. <i>Morris: Total</i>	22,803.61	41,272.22	72,998.59
County: Home Life	18,911.42	25,576.35	45,907.12
Dependency	3,731.06	15,695.87	27,091.47
Municipal	161.13		
12. <i>Burlington: Total</i>	9,855.78	24,507.88	72,574.10
County: Home Life	6,073.45	18,558.81	39,883.97
Dependency	3,782.33	5,949.07	32,690.13
Municipal			
13. <i>Gloucester: Total</i>	4,611.67	7,599.59	25,710.77
County: Home Life	3,888.14	5,514.22	18,972.36
Dependency	723.53	2,085.37	6,738.41
Municipal			
14. <i>Cumberland: Total</i>	6,562.70	17,920.66	48,044.17
County: Home Life	2,928.99	10,000.75	22,574.00
Dependency	3,633.71	7,919.91	25,470.17
Municipal			
15. <i>Somerset: Total</i>	5,223.42	13,044.63	51,648.70
County: Home Life	5,003.28	12,263.94	21,650.01
Dependency		471.67	29,472.68
Municipal	220.14	309.02	526.01
16. <i>Warren: Total</i>	4,176.74	9,754.85	61,962.27
County: Home Life	3,170.34	6,211.63	21,385.35
Dependency	1,006.40	3,543.22	40,576.92
Municipal			
17. <i>Salem: Total</i>	2,175.08	7,647.67	20,234.44
County: Home Life	1,235.91	5,006.03	6,442.43
Dependency	939.17	2,641.64	13,792.01
Municipal			
18. <i>Hunterdon: Total</i>	2,669.58	5,919.97	15,469.13
County: Home Life	2,464.17	5,447.84	12,482.05
Dependency			2,530.77
Municipal	205.41	472.13	456.31
19. <i>Ocean: Total</i>	3,669.81	5,799.87	21,319.86
County: Home Life	2,924.79	3,364.30	12,029.93
Dependency	745.02	2,435.57	9,032.68
Municipal			257.25
20. <i>Cape May: Total</i>	2,784.99	8,293.23	20,002.19
County: Home Life	1,435.33	4,410.78	10,111.30
Dependency	1,349.66	3,882.45	9,890.89
Municipal			
21. <i>Sussex: Total</i>	6,784.87	12,980.12	32,861.19
County: Home Life	2,600.48	3,849.73	12,417.17
Dependency	4,184.39	9,130.39	20,444.02
Municipal			

penditures from state funds for this administrative work was \$92,893.22 in 1921. In 1931 it was \$262,633.34. Of the total expenditure in 1921, 11.8 per cent. was from state funds. This had dropped to 6 per cent. in 1931.

Under the Home Life Act all relief grants authorized by the court are a mandatory charge against county funds. In 1921 the cost to the counties for such relief was \$390,746.17; in 1931, \$1,752,306.85.

*Also chargeable against county funds are relief grants to children committed by county courts under other laws and by municipal overseers of the poor in counties where there is a county almshouse or welfare house. In counties where there is no county institution the relief grants to cases committed by overseers of the poor are a charge against municipal funds.

Under this financing plan, counties have borne the brunt of the cost. In 1921, they financed 80.5 per cent.; in 1931, 92.3 per cent.

As previously discussed, commitments under the Home Life Act decreased proportionately while commitments under the other laws increased. The result of this change in emphasis is shown in the decrease in the county expenditure for aid under the Home Life Act from 49.5 per cent. of the total in 1921, to 40.4 per cent. in 1931. Expenditures under dependency commitments increased from 31 per cent. of the total in 1921, to 51.9 per cent. in 1931.

The proportion charged against municipalities has consistently formed a small part of the total expended. In 1921 this was 7.7 per cent.; last year it had dropped to 1.7 per cent.

Variations in county and municipal expenditures are shown in Table 7 for the years 1921, 1926 and 1931. In Essex County, with its rapidly increasing dependency commitments, the county expenditures for this item increased from \$40,477.82 in 1921, to \$803,700.33 in 1931. In 1921 the cost of such relief grants was about one-half the cost of relief grants under the Home Life Act and slightly in excess of municipal expenditures for dependency commitments by municipal overseers. In 1931 the cost to the

county for aid under dependency commitments was more than twice that spent under the Home Life Act and nearly forty times the municipal expenditure.

Hudson County's cost for relief grants under dependency commitments has been twice that for grants under the Home Life Act throughout the ten-year period. There have been no municipal expenditures resulting from overseer commitments as such commitments are through the county almshouse and thus become a county charge.

Bergen County's expenditures for dependency commitments have risen from \$539.76 in 1921, to \$119,511.01 in 1931. In Passaic County there were no county expenditures for dependency commitments in 1921. In 1931 the cost of such relief was \$57,625.99. Municipal expenditures in Passaic County increased from \$8,564.49 in 1921, to \$28,882.75 in 1931.

In Camden County aid under dependency commitments increased during these years from \$2,241.01 to \$95,937.80. In Atlantic County, relief grants from county funds under dependency commitments amounted to \$111.26 in 1921 and \$38,532.93 in 1931. In Somerset County there were no relief expenditures for dependency commitments from county funds in 1921, but \$29,472.68 in 1931. Relief in Warren County under dependency commitments cost the county \$1,006.40 in 1921 and \$40,576.92 in 1931. Striking increases, especially in expenditures under dependency commitments, are shown in the figures for most other counties.

Amounts of Relief Grants

Maximum relief grants under the Home Life Act are fixed by law. In 1921 the maximum was \$12 for the first child, \$8 for the second and \$7 for each additional child. In 1928 the law was amended to increase the maximum to \$16 for the first child, \$14 for the second and \$12 for each additional child. These payments are made entirely in the form of cash.

Relief grants under dependency commitments by courts or municipal overseers of the poor are handled similarly whether

the children are living with their family groups or in a foster home or institution. There is a cash payment of \$3.50 per week for the child's board unless the child is an infant or otherwise in need of special care. For such cases the board payment is at the rate of \$5 per week. The child is outfitted with clothing when it comes under the care of the board. New outfits are furnished each spring and fall, with replacements at other times if necessary. All children are given medical examination following commitment and medical and dental care later as needed. Milk for undernourished children is provided on recommendation of the physician in charge, and, more recently, for all children less than three years old.

Actual and relative relief expenditures from 1921 to 1931 are shown in Table 8. Relief grants in the form of cash payments

TABLE 8

RELIEF EXPENDITURES BY TYPE OF GRANT, 1921-1931

<i>Year ending</i>		<i>Cash Payments</i>		<i>Milk and</i>	
<i>June 30</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Home Life</i>	<i>Dependency</i>	<i>Clothing</i>	<i>Medical Care</i>
<i>Expenditures</i>					
1921.....	\$ 695,440.67	\$ 390,746.17	\$ 233,928.35	\$ 62,215.36	\$ 8,550.79
1922.....	859,941.50	467,795.55	317,229.55	62,422.84	12,493.56
1923.....	1,043,263.34	562,658.18	388,325.23	75,964.53	16,315.40
1924.....	1,222,838.86	636,550.32	449,902.52	120,940.27	15,445.75
1925.....	1,373,273.32	712,417.44	521,836.01	118,688.92	20,330.95
1926.....	1,662,281.33	792,643.38	641,887.70	201,659.62	26,090.63
1927.....	1,888,262.45	871,601.67	757,706.85	224,022.40	34,931.53
1928.....	2,179,305.20	939,039.40	911,954.51	278,511.23	49,800.06
1929.....	2,717,250.04	1,178,417.92	1,140,741.02	337,844.37	60,246.73
1930.....	3,385,704.88	1,433,978.21	1,396,438.88	478,351.03	76,936.76
1931.....	4,076,515.85	1,752,306.85	1,774,418.30	442,669.62	107,121.08
<i>Percentage</i>					
1921.....	100.0	56.2	33.6	9.0	1.2
1922.....	100.0	54.4	36.9	7.3	1.4
1923.....	100.0	53.9	37.2	7.3	1.6
1924.....	100.0	52.1	36.8	9.9	1.2
1925.....	100.0	51.9	38.0	8.6	1.5
1926.....	100.0	47.7	38.6	12.1	1.6
1927.....	100.0	46.2	40.1	11.9	1.8
1928.....	100.0	43.1	41.8	12.8	2.3
1929.....	100.0	43.4	42.0	12.4	2.2
1930.....	100.0	42.4	41.2	14.1	2.3
1931.....	100.0	43.0	43.5	10.9	2.6

formed 89.8 per cent. of the total spent in 1921 and 86.5 per cent. in 1931. During the period, however, the proportion of such relief given under the provisions of the Home Life Act decreased markedly and the proportion administered as part of relief to children under dependency commitment increased.

Expenditures for the clothing of children under dependency commitment have formed throughout the period from one-fourth to one-third of the total amount being spent in cash for their boarding care, and about one-tenth of the total relief administered by the state board.

The cost of milk and medical care has increased the amount of relief to dependent children by about one-twentieth of the grant in cash. The proportion of the total relief expenditure increased from 1.2 per cent. in 1921 to 2.6 per cent. in 1931.

Because of the number of children committed and discharged during the year and aided for varying periods, annual averages of relief grants per child under care have only approximate accuracy unless adjustment is made for differences in number of days covered by relief grants. Such adjustment was not possible from available data, but averages have been calculated for comparative purposes in relation to the number of children under care at the end of the year (See Table 9).

TABLE 9

AVERAGE ANNUAL RELIEF EXPENDITURE PER CHILD, 1921-1931

Year Ending June 30	Home Life Act	Dependency Commitment			
		Total	Board	Clothing	Medical
1921.....	\$ 71.99	\$204.22	\$156.79	\$41.70	\$5.73
1922.....	77.21	205.74	166.44	32.75	6.55
1923.....	91.40	209.23	169.06	33.07	7.10
1924.....	93.74	219.34	168.31	45.25	5.78
1925.....	98.62	211.34	166.88	37.96	6.50
1926.....	101.57	222.75	164.42	51.65	6.68
1927.....	101.37	231.53	172.56	51.02	7.95
1928.....	106.70	218.59	160.72	49.09	8.78
1929.....	123.42	222.79	165.16	48.91	8.72
1930.....	134.96	227.37	162.68	55.72	8.97
1931.....	134.47	215.42	164.47	41.03	9.92

These averages show a steady increase in annual relief per child under the Home Life Act from \$71.99 in 1921, to \$134.47 in 1931. Average relief grants in the form of cash payments for board have been consistently higher than the average relief grant under the Home Life Act. The additional aid in the form of clothing and medical care provided for children under dependency commitment has increased the difference still further, making the total relief per child so aided average \$215.42 in 1931 in comparison with \$134.47 under the Home Life Act.

As described in Chapter V, the commission made a detailed analysis of relief grants to children aided in October, 1931 under the two relief plans. The averages in this study relate to the number of children aided during a month and are, therefore, more accurate in certain respects than the annual averages here presented. They show even more strikingly, however, the differences in the amount of relief received by families and children transferred for aid under the Home Life Act and under dependency commitment.

CHAPTER IV

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

The commission has devoted much attention to the causes for the increasing tendency among public officials to place children under state care and the differences in the relative growth of transfers under the Home Life Act and other laws.

Aid is provided under the Home Life Act only for cases meeting fixed requirements for eligibility (See Chapter I). The petitioner must be a widowed mother of one or more children under sixteen years of age, or, in cases where both the father and mother are dead, a woman who has assumed responsibilities of mother to such children and is caring for them in her home. Inability to support and maintain the home without public aid must be proven. There is a residence requirement of five years in the county preceding application, or five years in the county and thereafter continuous residence in some county in New Jersey for not more than five years preceding application.

Application for relief is filed with the court of common pleas or the juvenile court. The law states that the application must contain information on dates of marriage, birth of child and death of husband, residence and settlement, all property of woman and children, efforts to support and the names and addresses of all known relatives.

A copy of the petition is forwarded to the overseers of the poor of the municipality of residence, the county counsel and the state board of children's guardians at least ten days before the date set for a hearing. The state board is assigned the responsibility for verification of statements in the petition and the preparation of a family budget upon which the amount of the relief grant is to be based. Report is made to the court, which may hold a hearing or refer the matter to a commissioner for hearing and recommendation.

If the conclusion of the court is that a relief grant is necessary, the court may commit the family to the care of the state board and fix the amount of relief in relation to the maximum specified in the law. The grant is to be paid to the mother from county funds through the state board until revoked by court order.

Cases come to the state board under dependency commitments without preliminary investigation by the board's staff to determine eligibility for public aid or the advisability of having the supervision of such aid undertaken by a state agency.

The 1899 Act establishing the state board of children's guardians was drafted primarily to insure protective care of children committed to almshouses and to make possible their early placement in a suitable foster home. The loss of legal guardianship by parents was considered an effective deterrent of commitments. The provision that all relief administered by the state board was to be a mandatory charge against the county or municipal budget was also expected to check any tendency by officials to commit cases where the need and eligibility for aid had not been established.

The scope of the board's program was considerably enlarged in 1910 by the ruling of the attorney-general, permitting payments to mothers for children kept in their own homes even though under dependency commitment. No attempt was made by the board to establish eligibility requirements for overseer commitments so the types of family problems which could be aided from public funds under state supervision might be limited. The Child Welfare Act of 1915 and other laws leave entirely to local decision the extent to which relief in families with children may come through the overseers or through the state board.

Types of Child Care

To acquaint itself with county policies concerning dependent children left with family groups and those taken away, the commission studied the placement of all state board children for whom relief expenditure was made during October, 1931.

As shown in Table 10, there were 25,269 children aided. Of these, 13,698 lived with their mothers and were assisted under the Home Life Act. Also resident with their mothers but assisted following a dependency commitment were 6,992 children. Likewise aided were 894 children living with relatives. The proportion of children living with their own families thus formed 85.4 per cent. of the total.

TABLE 10

CHILDREN AIDED IN OCTOBER, 1931, BY TYPE OF CARE

(Counties arranged in order of Population, 1930 Census)

	Total	—With Mothers—		With Relatives	In	
		Home Life	Depend- ency		Foster Homes	In Institutions
TOTAL	25,269*	13,698	6,992	894	2,608	1,077
1. Essex	6,709	2,711	2,829	273	626	270
2. Hudson	6,716	2,938	2,535	250	616	377
3. Bergen	1,301	666	425	54	104	52
4. Union	1,328	1,095	13	12	166	42
5. Passaic	1,304	873	176	51	130	74
6. Camden	1,400	856	302	41	166	35
7. Middlesex	1,219	1,080	20	13	57	49
8. Mercer	1,167	967	97	24	48	31
9. Monmouth	749	477	59	40	142	31
10. Atlantic	459	289	44	19	94	13
11. Morris	459	331	24	11	76	17
12. Burlington	482	289	82	11	87	13
13. Gloucester	188	159	14	5	10	0
14. Cumberland	355	211	75	19	46	4
15. Somerset	305	186	58	9	30	22
16. Warren	415	174	150	26	45	20
17. Salem	152	61	26	5	51	9
18. Hutnterdon	105	91	2	0	9	3
19. Ocean	148	90	16	13	26	3
20. Cape May	125	74	12	6	31	2
21. Sussex	183	80	33	12	48	10
Percentage	100.0	54.2	27.7	3.5	10.3	4.3

* Also approximately 3,500 children under guardianship of board for whom no expenditures were made during month.

There were 2,608 children resident in foster homes and 1,077 in institutions. These formed 10.3 and 4.3 per cent. respectively of the total group.

In Essex County more children resident with mothers were aided under dependency commitment than under the Home Life Act, and almost as many in Hudson and Warren. Bergen took care of about two-thirds of its total cases of mother's aid in this way; Camden, Burlington, Cumberland, Somerset, Salem and Sussex about one-third.

Except in Essex County, overseer commitments were through a county institution. Transfer of such cases to the state board resulted in a transfer of financing responsibility from the municipal to the county budget. In Essex, overseer commitments did not affect municipal responsibility as there was no county almshouse. However, as previously noted, nearly all commitments in Essex were through the court so that a large amount of relief to children in their family homes also represented a transfer of municipal financing.

In contrast, very few children were aided in their family homes in Union, Middlesex and Hunterdon counties except under the Home Life Act. In these counties the lack of a county institution prevented any change of financing by a child dependency commitment unless this was done through the county court. The policy of the courts has been to leave to municipal overseers all family aid cases not eligible for assistance under the Home Life Act and to limit dependency commitments to children needing care in a foster home or institution.

Causes for Commitment

The Commission also analyzed the reasons why children aided in their family homes, in foster homes and institutions during October, 1931, were in need of public relief. The cause as given in the original commitment was checked against the most recent information found on the case record in the state board office. While essential information was lacking in some instances, it is believed that the causes as here presented give a fair picture of the problems being transferred to state supervision under the child dependency laws (See Table 11).

Fathers of the 13,698 children aided under the Home Life Act were dead. Death of father also was the dependency cause

TABLE 11

WHEREABOUTS OF FATHER OF CHILDREN AIDED IN OCTOBER, 1931

	Total*	With Mothers		With Relatives	In Foster Homes	In Institutions
		Home Life	Dependency			
CHILDREN						
Total	25,269	13,698	6,992	894	2,608	1,077
Father						
Dead	16,493	13,698	1,679	455	449	212
In correctional institution	1,685	.....	1,186	77	270	152
In hospital for insane, epileptic or feeble-minded..	916	.....	820	11	62	23
In tuberculosis sanatorium	654	.....	534	47	44	29
In other hospital	346	.....	294	2	29	21
Improper guardian	575	.....	39	23	376	137
Living with family but unable to support.....	1,348	.....	786	106	282	174
Deserter	2,801	.....	1,592	158	775	276
Divorced	15	.....	8	.....	6	1
Child illegitimate	436	.....	54	15	315	52
PERCENTAGE						
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Father						
Dead	65.3	100.0	24.0	50.9	17.2	19.7
In correctional institution	6.6	.....	17.0	8.6	10.4	14.1
In hospital for insane, epileptic or feeble-minded..	3.6	.....	11.7	1.3	2.4	2.1
In tuberculosis sanatorium	2.7	.....	7.6	5.2	1.7	2.7
In other hospital	1.4	.....	4.2	0.2	1.1	2.0
Improper guardian	2.3	.....	0.6	2.6	14.4	12.7
Living with family but unable to support.....	5.3	.....	11.2	11.6	10.8	16.2
Deserter	11.1	.....	22.8	17.9	29.7	25.6
Divorced .....	.....	.....	0.1	.....	0.2	0.1
Child illegitimate	1.7	.....	.08	1.7	12.1	4.8

* Also approximately 3,500 children under commitment to the Board for whom no relief expenditures were made during month.

for 1,679 of the children aided under dependency commitment and living with their mother, 455 children living with relatives, 449 in foster homes and 212 in institutions. While some of the cases were ineligible for aid under the Home Life Act because of the lack of required county residence, study of case records and of practises in court and overseer commitments showed that often children eligible for such aid had been committed for dependency so that a larger amount of relief could be obtained. Also, the com-

mitment procedure was simpler and quicker than that involved in establishing eligibility for aid under the Home Life Act.

The father was a temporary or continued deserter in 2,801 of the cases under dependency commitment. Most of these children were living with their mothers or relatives, but a large proportion were being cared for in foster homes and institutions. While the records of the state board showed that in certain cases local authorities had insisted upon legal steps being taken to locate the deserter and force his return, many commitments were found to have been made with little investigation of the reported desertion.

There were 1,685 children aided because they had no support while the father was an inmate of a correctional institution. Here also there was much variation in local practise. In some counties few commitments of this type were made even when the father was under a long prison sentence. In other counties children were committed where the father's term was only thirty days.

Another large group of children aided were the 1,348 in families in which the father was living at home, but for certain reasons was unable to provide sufficient support for the family needs. A number of these fathers were blind, crippled, paralyzed, or otherwise incapacitated. The review of case records also showed dependency commitments by local officials when the father was working, though at a wage insufficient to support all his children. There also was a tendency in certain places to commit children for dependency relief while the father was temporarily unemployed because of seasonal conditions. Widowers were frequently helped to provide adequate care of children after the mother's death.

Over half of the children in this group were living at home with the father and mother. Most of the others were under placement in foster homes, but a relatively large proportion of the total in institutions had fathers living with other members of the family group.

When the father was an inmate of a hospital for the insane, epileptic, or feebleminded, a tuberculosis sanatorium or under

continued hospital care, the practise in most counties was to provide for the supervisory care of the children by committing them to the state board. In October there were 1,916 children aided while the father was under such institutional care. Nearly all these children were resident with their mothers or relatives.

There were 575 children aided who had been committed to the board because of the improper guardianship of parents and 436 because of illegitimacy. These children were being cared for mainly in foster homes and institutions, although in certain cases relief was being given while the children were resident with mothers.

So far only the father's relationship to the need for a dependency commitment has been considered. In a number of cases, however, the mother's death or continued absence from the home is an important factor in the dependency situation. The mothers of 1,596 of the children under dependency commitment were dead. In 557 of these cases the fathers were also dead.

There were 315 children who had been deserted by their mother, 245 whose mothers were in a correctional institution, 392 in a hospital for the insane, epileptic or feeble-minded, 88 in a tuberculosis sanatorium and 207 under other hospital care.

Home relief can be given under the Home Life Act when both the mother and father are dead and the children are being cared for in the home by a woman who has assumed the responsibilities of a mother. Such aid, however, is given only in a small proportion of cases committed under the Home Life Act.

Recommendations

Before formulating its recommendations, the commission reviewed the eligibility provisions in mother's aid and child dependency legislation in other states. Letters also were sent to state officials requesting information on problems arising in the local operation of certain features of their state laws.

A questionnaire was sent to judges of all county courts in New Jersey handling child dependency cases, overseers of the poor in municipalities with population over 15,000 and all smaller municipalities from which overseer commitments were made during the past year, directors of boards of chosen freeholders, county counsels, county adjusters and executives of welfare agencies. In this questionnaire inquiry was made as to desirability of extending eligibility requirements under the Home Life Act to replace family aid by dependency commitment. Expression of opinion also was requested as to the limitation of child dependency commitments to cases where need of state guardianship had been established.

The advisability of suggested changes was considered in joint conferences of the commission with the State Board of Children's Guardians, the State Association of Chosen Freeholders and the Child Welfare Division of the American Legion. Representatives of the commission also discussed the proposed program at meetings of civic and community groups in different parts of the state.

As the result of its studies the commission reached the unanimous conclusion that eligibility of a child for state care should be fixed by law.

Placing a child under the legal guardianship of the state board is recommended by the commission only when it has been proven:

That the mother or person standing in loco parentis is dead or cannot be found, and there is no person legally liable for the child's support.

Or that the mother or person standing in loco parentis is not a proper person to have the child's custody or control.

Such change in eligibility requirement the commission found necessitated amendment to the 1915 Child Welfare Act, the 1918 Act defining the powers of the State Board of Children's Guardians and the 1924 and 1931 revisions of the Poor Law. These amendments have been drafted and introduced as Assembly Bills 464, 465, 466 and 467 in the present legislature.

The commission recommends the extension of present eligibility requirements for aid under the Home Life Act to include cases where there is need for aid to children because of the continued absence of the father from home or his inability to support. Such extension would apply in the following instances:

Father is in penal institution under sentence which will not terminate within one year from the date of filing application for relief.

Father is an inmate of a public institution for an illness requiring prolonged care, or, under certain circumstances, is under care for such illness in a private institution or at home.

Father is a proven deserter during a period of at least one year preceding the date of filing application, and has been under indictment for desertion or with an outstanding warrant against him during a period of at least six months preceding date of application.

Father is divorced and mother has been unable to secure maintenance or support from the father for the child through legal proceedings.

The petitioner for relief, the commission believes, should be required to prove that unless relief is granted she will be unable properly to support and educate her children and that there is no relative having the legal responsibility and financial ability to provide support.

While the commission believes that relief for a child should terminate automatically at the age of sixteen years, as under the Home Life Act, it recommends that temporary continuation should be permitted when special circumstances warrant.

These extensions in eligibility requirements are embodied in Assembly Bill 463, revising the 1913 Home Life Act. This bill is before the present legislature.

The commission believes that if these changes in eligibility requirements are made, the number of cases at present under the

care of the board and the number of future commitments would be greatly reduced. Requirement of definite proof of continued desertion and of the inauguration of legal proceedings will eliminate from state care many of the children now being aided at home following the father's reported desertion. Fewer children will come under state supervision through the requirement that the father's inability to support be established by medical examination before relief to the children is provided in the home. There also will be a reduction in the number of children whose fathers are in correctional institutions, because of the elimination of cases where the father's term is less than one year.

This decrease in number of children will be counterbalanced to a certain extent by cases from counties where aid to children living at home is given infrequently except under the Home Life Act. The commission studies indicate, however, that most counties are aiding under dependency commitment the children in families where a continued need exists as described in the commission recommendations. The increase for cases not previously aided will therefore probably be slight.

CHAPTER V.

RELIEF GRANTS

Extension of eligibility requirements to include under the Home Life Act children now aided under dependency commitment immediately raises certain problems of policy with reference to the plan of relief grants.

Assistance under the Home Life Act is limited by law to a maximum of \$16 for the first child in the family, \$14 for the second child and \$12 for each additional child. Payments are made once a month by check. Under this relief plan, the average relief grant during October, 1931, was \$12.44 per child or about forty cents a day (Table 12). As the number of children averaged 2.5 per family, the relief grant for a family was about \$31 a month. The annual grant indicated from these monthly figures is approximately \$150 per child and \$375 per family.

While the monthly grants per child varied somewhat in the counties, special study showed that the differences were due mainly to the number of children aided per family and the proportion receiving assistance in relation to a \$16, \$14 or \$12 maximum.

Children under dependency commitment are assisted partly in the form of cash, partly in clothing and partly through the provision of milk and medical care. For such children living with mothers and relatives, total relief averaged \$24.50 in October. As the number of children averaged 2.7 per family, the total relief per family was about \$66. This amount, however, is above the monthly average for the year, as many children received their outfits of winter clothing during the month studied. Adjusting for this extra expenditure in calculating the yearly averages, an annual relief expenditure of probably at least \$250 per child is indicated in comparison with \$150 per child under the Home Life Act. Average annual relief per family is \$675 if the children are under dependency commitment and \$375 if aided under the Home Life Act.

TABLE 12

RELIEF EXPENDITURES IN OCTOBER, 1931, BY TYPE OF CARE
(Counties arranged in order of population, 1930 Census)

EXPENDITURES	Total Children	Under Home Life Act	Under Dependency Commitment			
			Total	With Mother or Relatives	In Foster Homes	In Insti- tutions
Total	\$443,553.09	\$170,437.88	\$273,115.21	\$193,201.93	\$60,205.04	\$19,708.24
1. Essex	133,537.62	35,105.02	98,432.60	79,193.48	14,173.12	5,066.00
2. Hudson	128,585.79	39,248.36	89,337.43	67,932.67	14,300.47	7,104.29
3. Bergen	23,234.33	8,547.47	14,686.86	11,265.77	2,490.54	930.55
4. Union	18,439.09	13,109.89	5,329.20	1,060.46	3,430.78	837.96
5. Passaic	20,019.59	10,631.11	9,388.48	5,248.22	2,816.50	1,323.76
6. Camden	23,928.02	10,689.72	13,238.30	8,617.21	4,075.24	545.85
7. Middlesex	13,927.03	10,922.51	3,004.52	808.09	1,430.18	766.25
8. Mercer	15,919.40	11,758.75	4,160.65	2,575.51	1,056.98	528.16
9. Monmouth	11,888.51	6,194.50	5,694.01	1,831.09	3,322.99	539.93
10. Atlantic	7,551.49	3,793.81	3,757.68	1,458.19	2,080.03	219.46
11. Morris	6,598.46	3,699.19	2,899.27	872.78	1,754.11	272.38
12. Burlington	8,333.78	3,585.28	4,748.50	1,882.59	2,647.41	218.50
13. Gloucester	2,736.45	1,899.00	837.45	641.23	196.22	.....
14. Cumberland	5,011.24	2,185.22	2,826.02	1,768.55	982.94	74.53
15. Somerset	4,907.20	2,138.00	2,769.20	1,581.36	772.87	414.97
16. Warren	6,737.98	2,064.10	4,673.88	3,378.57	899.77	395.54
17. Salem	2,786.02	632.90	2,153.12	770.84	1,219.41	162.87
18. Hunterdon	1,454.13	1,172.19	281.94	53.79	174.15	54.00
19. Ocean	2,771.32	1,240.00	1,531.32	775.87	713.92	41.53
20. Cape May	1,921.82	857.23	1,064.59	296.55	734.54	33.50
21. Sussex	3,263.82	963.63	2,300.19	1,084.81	1,037.17	178.21

TABLE 12—*Continued*
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 RELIEF EXPENDITURES IN OCTOBER, 1931, BY TYPE OF CARE

(Counties arranged in order of population, 1930 Census)

AVERAGE PER CHILD AIDED	Total Children	Under Home Life Act	Under Dependency Commitment			
			Total	With Mother or Relatives	In Foster Homes	In Insti- tutions
Total	\$17.55	\$12.44	\$23.60	\$24.50	\$23.08	\$18.30
1. Essex	19.90	12.95	24.62	25.53	22.64	18.76
2. Hudson	19.15	13.36	23.65	24.39	23.22	18.87
3. Bergen	17.86	12.83	23.13	23.52	23.95	17.90
4. Union	13.88	11.97	22.87	42.42	20.67	19.95
5. Passaic	15.35	12.18	21.78	23.12	21.67	17.89
6. Camden	17.09	12.49	24.34	25.12	24.55	15.60
7. Middlesex	11.43	10.11	21.62	26.69	25.10	15.64
8. Mercer	13.64	12.16	20.80	21.29	22.02	17.04
9. Monmouth	15.87	12.99	20.93	19.61	23.40	17.42
10. Atlantic	16.45	13.13	22.10	23.15	22.12	16.88
11. Morris	14.38	11.18	22.65	24.94	23.08	16.02
12. Burlington	17.29	12.41	24.60	20.24	30.43	16.81
13. Gloucester	14.56	11.94	28.88	33.75	19.62	.....
14. Cumberland	14.12	10.36	19.63	18.81	21.37	18.63
15. Somerset	16.09	11.49	23.27	23.60	25.76	18.86
16. Warren	16.24	11.86	19.30	19.20	19.99	19.78
17. Salem	18.33	10.38	23.66	24.87	23.91	18.10
18. Hunterdon	13.84	12.88	20.14	26.90	19.35	18.00
19. Ocean	18.73	13.78	26.40	26.75	27.46	13.84
20. Cape May	15.37	11.58	20.87	16.48	23.69	16.75
21. Sussex	17.84	12.05	22.33	24.11	21.61	17.82

The number of children aided under dependency commitment while living with mothers or relatives was less than half the number aided under the Home Life Act (See Table 10). However, the higher grant per child brought the monthly total for relief to \$193,201.93 in comparison with \$170,437.88 under the Home Life Act.

Relief to dependent children in foster homes cost \$60,205.04 in October. The expenditure for institutional care was \$19,708.24. The average relief grant per child in foster homes was \$23.08, or slightly less than the average for children living with mothers and relatives. The cost for children in institutions averaged \$18.30.

The type of aid under the two plans of relief-giving was also different (See Table 13). The average cash payment for the

TABLE 13

EXPENDITURES IN OCTOBER, 1931, BY TYPE OF RELIEF AND CARE

EXPENDITURES	Home Life Act	Dependency Commitment			
		Total	With Mother or Relatives	In Foster Homes	In Insti- tutions
Total	\$170,437.88	\$273,115.21	\$193,201.93	\$60,205.04	\$19,708.24
Cash Payments	170,437.88	173,042.28	116,636.15	39,984.12	16,422.01
Clothing		76,051.41	56,286.12	16,926.69	2,838.60
Milk and Medi- cal Care		24,021.52	20,279.66	3,294.23	447.63
AVERAGE PER CHILD AIDED					
Total	\$12.44	\$23.60	\$24.50	\$23.08	\$18.30
Cash Payments	12.44	14.96	14.79	15.33	15.25
Clothing		6.57	7.14	6.49	2.63
Milk and Medi- cal Care		2.07	2.57	1.26	.42

board of a child under dependency commitment was \$14.96 in comparison with \$12.44 for aid under the Home Life Act. In addition, the average child under dependency commitment received during the month clothing costing \$6.57 and milk and medical care costing \$2.07.

Slightly less was spent for clothing for the average child in a foster home than when living with mother or relatives, and con-

siderably less for milk and medical care. A comparatively small amount was spent for these supplementary items for the average child boarded in an institution.

The commission's field studies showed certain difficulties arising in adjusting the amount of a relief grant to a family's financial need. The state board is required under the Home Life Act to present a budget to the court for use in the establishment of the amount of a relief grant. The budget in many cases shows a deficit between family income and necessary expenditure which can be met by allowing the maximum grant per child or less. If the family budget shows a larger amount of aid is required than can be secured from the maximum grant, the necessary assistance cannot be provided. Under such circumstances the children are often committed for dependency so that the larger relief grant may be secured, or supplementary municipal aid is granted with double administrative costs for supervision.

The present relief procedure following a dependency commitment is frequently unsatisfactory when used for the aid of children living with mothers or relatives. At the time of commitment the number of children transferred from local to state supervision is customarily related to the amount of family relief required. If a family needs much aid and has many children, all are committed. If a family is partially self-supporting, as many children as will provide the required family aid are committed.

As the state board has power to determine if a child is to be placed on a boarding basis or a free basis following commitment, it attempts to keep the number of children in a family who are on the boarding list adjusted so that the amount of relief will be in agreement with the family relief requirement. This is not done routinely as a matter of family budget planning, however, and in a number of instances grants were obviously above or below what would be provided under a different system of fixing the amount of a relief grant relief.

Recommendations.

The present tendency in other states is to place continued relief to dependent children living with their mothers on a family budget basis. The preparation of a budget necessitates a thor-

ough investigation of the financial resources of the family and its relief needs. It helps to make clear to the mother why a specified amount of relief is being provided and the standards which she should try to maintain in its expenditure. It makes possible the adjustment of relief grants in accordance with differences in living costs in rural and urban sections and at different periods of time.

Following careful consideration, the commission therefore has embodied in its recommended revision of the Home Life Act (Assembly Bill 463), the utilization of the budget system in estimating amount of all relief grants. Continuation of the present plan of providing all such aid in the form of a cash payment is advocated by the commission.

When a child is under dependency commitment and boarded in a foster home or institution, the commission recommends no change in the present plan of providing relief for such cases in the form of board payment plus clothing and medical care needed.

CHAPTER VI

ADMINISTRATION

The most effective and efficient method of caring for the needs of dependent children in New Jersey has received much consideration by the commission. Court procedures and the practises in central and district offices of the state board have been carefully studied. Administrative plans in other states have been reviewed and evaluated in relation to existing situations in New Jersey. Proposed changes have been discussed with interested groups. Summaries of the commission's findings have been given wide distribution through the public press.

These studies have convinced the commission that important administrative changes should be made to safe-guard the needs of certain groups of dependent children in New Jersey requiring continued public supervision and support. Such changes also would contemplate greater local control over the taxpayers' increasingly heavy burden of child dependency relief.

The commission believes the plan of care for children living awaay from their family group and requiring the protection of legal guardianship by the state board should be different from the care for those aided while resident with their mothers or relatives.

The present plan of care for these two types of cases and the recommended changes will be discussed separately.

Children Needing Guardianship Protection

All children now under the care of the state board are in its legal custody except those committed under the Home Life Act. The board seldom has been required to use its legal powers to obtain the co-operation of a mother in providing adequate care for her children. However, the loss of legal guardianship, if fully realized, is often a hard blow to the self-respect of the mother and perhaps a sick or disabled father unable to provide financial support for their children.

This loss of parental guardianship follows automatically from the commitment of a child by an overseer of the poor. There is no requirement in the Child Welfare Act that there be a court hearing to establish dependency and eligibility for public relief. Only in Essex County has the court arranged for the full-time services of an experienced staff to investigate applications for dependency commitments. Elsewhere the Commission found relatively little investigation before legal guardianship was transferred to the state board. Infrequently was there a court hearing unless an important matter of parental neglect or abuse was involved. As there is no legal requirement that the board of chosen freeholders or the State Board of Children's Guardians be notified of an application for a dependency commitment, there is no opportunity for expression of opinion by either group as to the need for commitment before this takes place.

Recommended Changes

The commission would place the transfer of guardianship to the state board and the mandatory financing of relief grants from local funds upon a level justified by the importance of the issues involved. In brief, the commission recommends for this group of child dependency cases the following procedure:

Notifications

Within twenty-four hours after he has placed a child in a public institution, private institution or family home, the overseer of the poor or a director of a county welfare board is to notify the State Board of Children's Guardians and the board of freeholders, and provide a written report on the child and the reasons for his need of public relief.

Also, if the parents, guardian or person having the custody and control of child are dead, or cannot be found, and there is no person legally liable for the child's support, a petition may be filed by any person, association or corporation having as one of its objects the prevention of cruelty to children, and interested in the child, with the juvenile and domestic relations court of the county. Copies of this petition are to be sent by the court to the State Board of Children's Guardians, the board of freeholders, the chief probation officer of the county, and the municipal overseer of the poor, or the director of the county welfare board in counties operating under the county welfare plan. This notice is to be sent at least twenty days preceding the date set by the court for the hearing.

Investigations

As soon as possible after the receipt of a notice of the placement of a child by an overseer of the poor, or a copy of a court petition for child

dependency relief, the state board is to make an investigation of the home life conditions and settlement of the child.

The report of this investigation is to be filed with the board of free-holders and the juvenile and domestic relations court within twenty days after the notification of a child's placement by an overseer, or within the time allowed before the court hearing on a dependency petition. Where the date of the hearing has not previously been set, as is the case with children referred to the state board by poor officials, the court sets the date of the hearing after receiving the report from the state board, with a minimum interval of five days required after the notification of the hearing has been sent out.

Commitments

If upon the completion of a court hearing on the case, it appears that the mother or person standing in loco parentis is dead or cannot be found and there is no person legally liable for the support of the child, or that the mother or person standing in loco parentis is not a proper person to have the custody or control of the child, the court may commit the child to the care, custody and control of the State Board of Children's Guardians.

Such commitment makes the state board the legal guardian with rights superseding those of the parents. Guardianship continues until the child is twenty-one years of age, unless the board decides that it is in the best interests of the child to return him to the custody of a parent or parents.

Financing Responsibility

Pending commitment, by the court to the state board, the responsibility for arranging for the care of a dependent child and financing, the cost is to remain with the municipal overseer of the poor, or with the director of a county welfare board in counties where the county plan of public relief administration has been adopted.

Following commitment, responsibility for arranging for the care of the child rests with the state board. The cost of the child's maintenance, clothing and medical care is made a mandatory charge against the county budget by the court at the time of commitment, and the county is billed each month by the state board for the cost of any relief grants as long as the child is under the board's legal guardianship.

In preparing the above plan, the commission has endeavored to leave untouched all present responsibilities for the initial handling of child dependency problems by local officials. Overseers of the poor will continue to be able to place children in institutions or family homes under the general supervision of the state board. There is no change in present procedures in the filing of dependency petitions in the courts.

If the recommended procedure is adopted, however, there will no longer be a removal of a child from the legal guardianship of its parents and a mandatory charge of the cost of his maintenance

against the county budget, until the need for such transfer of guardianship and the continued granting of public relief has been thoroughly investigated and established through court proceedings. The board of freeholders will have opportunity for participation in the review of eligibility for relief. The state board will be in charge of preliminary investigations.

In order that the recommended plan could be inaugurated, the commission found that it would be necessary to amend four laws. Amendments were therefore drafted by the commission counsel and introduced at the present session of the legislature.

• Assembly 464 amends certain sections of Chapter 147, P. L. 1918, defining the powers and duties of the State Board of Children's Guardians, to provide for the recommended preliminary investigation by the board before commitment of a child to its legal guardianship, the filing of its investigation report with the board of freeholders and the court, the establishment of eligibility requirements for commitment, and the requiring of a court hearing at which the board of freeholders may be represented.

Changes in the responsibilities of directors of county welfare boards in connection with the placement and commitment of children are made possible by Assembly 465, which amends certain sections of the 1931 revision of the poor law providing for county relief. Assembly 466 makes similar changes in the responsibilities of municipal overseers of the poor in counties operating under the plan of municipal relief administration.

The 1915 Child Welfare Act is amended by Assembly 467 to make eligibility requirements for transfer of guardianship more specific, provide for preliminary investigation of petitions by the state board, and insure greater participation by a representative of the board of freeholders in the review of a child's eligibility for county relief before this is made a matter of court order.

Dependent Children Resident with Mothers

Aid to widowed mothers under the Home Life Act is granted and revoked by court order. Responsibility for investigation of eligibility, as well as supervision of relief if granted, is assigned by law to the state board.

A petition providing information required for the determination of eligibility is filed with the clerk of the court (See Chapter 4). Copies of the petition are sent to the state board and to the county counsel, at least ten days before the date set for the hearing. The board's verification of statements in the petition and its recommended budget for relief are presented to the court for consideration at the time of the hearing.

Hearings were attended in eleven counties by the Commission's staff. These observations and information obtained in other phases of the Commission inquiries have shown both advantages and disadvantages in the present plan by which the court is responsible for child dependency decisions where a transfer of legal guardianship is not involved.

The crowded calendar of the courts and the infrequent petitions for relief in some counties brought variations in the promptness with which aid could be granted to cases requiring immediate assistance. For instance, in Essex County hearings are scheduled once a month while Burlington has a three month interval between hearings. As no grant can be revoked except by court order, the interval between hearings may bring continuation of a relief grant for several weeks beyond the time when it should be terminated. The pressure of other court business also limits greatly the time available for individual cases. In one county the Commission investigators found sixty-seven cases disposed of by the court in ninety-five minutes. In another county twenty-seven minutes were spent on twenty-five cases. In contrast, the judge in one county spent seventy minutes on nine cases, and in still another county eighty-eight minutes on the same number.

There also was little privacy during the consideration of cases in some courts. In certain courts, however, much attention was given to having a private hearing for each case.

The Commission investigation showed few instances where the recommendation of the state board were not accepted by the court. Seldom was the recommended grant exceeded in the court order, although in certain instances a smaller amount was allowed. The recommendation of the state board for termination of a grant also was usually accepted.

In preparing its recommendations to the last legislature for an old age relief plan, the commission considered the administration of old age relief grants by the court. Several judges advised the commission that it would be impossible for them to give sufficient time to the consideration of individual cases, and also expressed opposition to making old age relief a court responsibility. The commission therefore recommended that the administration of old age relief be placed under a county welfare board and not made a matter of court order.

The courts, however, have been administering relief under the Home Life Act during the last eighteen years in a way that has given widespread satisfaction. The commission therefore is agreed that no radical change in administrative responsibility should be made. At present approximately 15,000 children are being aided by court order under the Home Life Act. The recommended extensions of eligibility previously discussed will bring a larger number of children under this act, some of whom already are being aided under other laws. A careful review of eligibility under the new requirements is essential in safeguarding the care of the many children now under state supervision and future applicants for aid.

The commission believes that eventually responsibility for child dependency relief where transfer of legal guardianship is not involved should not be a court responsibility. It urges further consideration by interested groups of the type of substitute plan of administration which best suits local needs in New Jersey.

The legislation recommended by the commission for enactment at the present session therefore makes no change in present court responsibility for final decision on eligibility for aid under the Home Life Act. It opens the way, however, when this is desired by the court, for the handling of much of the detailed work by a referee and the use of the court's time for hearing only cases where the decision of the referee has been questioned by the state board of children's guardians or the board of chosen freeholders. It also makes possible a closer relationship with the board of freeholders through the requirement that the referee appointed by the court for the hearing of these cases be the county adjuster or other person recommended by the board of freeholders.

Because of the frequently long interval between court hearings the commission decided as the result of its investigation to recommend that the State Board of Children's Guardians as the agency in supervisory charge be given the power to suspend or reduce relief grants when its investigation showed such a change would be advisable. If the decision were questioned, however, the case could be brought into court for review and ruling on the change in relief grant.

As previously described, the commission has recommended certain important extensions of eligibility for relief under the Home Life Act to care for certain groups of cases in need of continued public relief and now usually aided by commitment of the children to the legal guardianship of the board and their continued placement in the family home. The commission has also decided following much consideration to place all relief grants under the Home Life Act on a budget basis.

These and other changes have been embodied in Assembly 463 of the present session of the legislature and the amendments filed by the commission with the Assembly committee on judiciary, on April 11. Because of the importance of the various provisions in this bill in securing essential care in a family home for children lacking means of support following the death or continued absence of the father, the bill with the recommended commission amendments is printed in full in the appendix to this report.

Advantages of Commission Program

The commission considers that the changes made possible through the enactment of the proposed legislation will go far in laying a sound foundation for a strong program in New Jersey directed at the prevention and control of child dependency.

The recommended plan will place at the service of public officials in all parts of the state the experience in handling varied types of child dependency problems gained by the State Board of Children's Guardians during the many years of its organization. It will make these services available when the child dependency problem has first arisen and when the case is still officially under the care of local agencies. If there is no apparent necessity for placing the case under continued state supervision, no transfer of

responsibility takes place. There is no loss of local administrative control, and the state board is not burdened with a large number of cases requiring temporary relief and frequent visitation to assist in an early return to self-support.

The time of the staff of the state board will be conserved for preventive services in investigation and for continued supervision of children aided under the new eligibility requirements for transfer of legal guardianship to the board and for mother's aid under the Home Life Act. The number of children under care will probably be noticeably reduced and the cost of their relief grants.

The commission believes that many of the administrative problems now arising in the state care of children would be lessened by the adoption of the recommended program. The results, it believes, would be directly beneficial to the dependent children and the taxpayers of New Jersey.

APPENDIX
COMMISSION REVISION OF HOME LIFE ACT
WITH COMMISSION AMENDMENTS

ASSEMBLY, NO. 463
WITH AMENDMENTS PRESENTED TO THE ASSEMBLY
COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY, APRIL 11, 1932

AN ACT to promote home life for dependent children (Revision of 1932), and providing penalties for violations thereof.

BE IT ENACTED *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey*:

Definitions:

1. For the purpose of this act, the following words and terms shall be deemed and taken to have the meaning herein given to them:

(a) The word "mother" when used in this act shall include any female standing in loco parentis to any child or children, and assuming the responsibility of a mother.

(b) "Settlement" of a person when used in this act shall be his right under the provisions of this act to assistance and support as herein provided.

(c) The masculine noun and pronoun shall include the feminine.

(b) The word "may" shall be construed to be permissive.

(e) The term "public charge" when used in this act shall mean a person to whom it is necessary to furnish assistance or support as provided in this act.

(f) "County adjuster" is the official of that designation appointed by the board of chosen freeholders and authorized to act in the cases of commitment or admission of insane persons to State or county hospitals for the insane.

2. Subject to the provisions of this act, any widow who is the mother of a dependent child or children under the age of sixteen, and who is unable to support them and maintain her home, and any mother or stepmother of any such child whose father is in a penal institution under sentence which will not terminate within one year from date of filing of petition, or is an inmate of a public institution for an illness requiring prolonged care, or under care for such illness in a private institution or incapacitated at home when such care in a public institution is not available or essential and such other care is in accordance with the recommendations of the medical director of the public institution to which application for care has been made supported by a written case report filed with the State Board of Children's Guardians, or is a deserter under indictment for desertion or with an outstanding warrant issued against him for his arrest on the ground of desertion, for a period of at least six months preceding date of filing petition and who has not been located after diligent search, for a period of at least one year preceding the date of filing of petition, or is divorced, provided the mother has been unable to secure maintenance or support from the father of said child or children through legal proceedings, may present a petition for assistance to the juvenile and domestic relations court of the

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county wherein she has a legal settlement; *provided, however,* that the court of common pleas of such county shall have concurrent jurisdiction with said juvenile and domestic relations court to hear and determine all matters pursuant to the provisions of this act.

3. Such petition shall be verified and shall set forth the following:

(a) Her name, names of her children, the dates and places of their birth, and the time and place of her marriage.

(b) Her residence and length of time that she has been a resident of the State, the length of time that she has lived at said residence and the address or addresses of her place or places of abode for the previous ten years, and the date, as near as possible, when she moved in and when she left said place or places of residence.

(c) A statement of all the property, real and personal, belonging to her and to each of her children, which statement shall include any future or contingent interests which she or any of them may have.

(d) A statement of the efforts made by her to support her children.

(e) The names, relationships and addresses of all her and her husband's relatives, that may be known.

(f) (If husband dead) date of husband's death. (If husband living) date of his confinement in penal or other public or private institution and term and nature of sentence or confinement if known. Date husband incapacitated if confined at home and nature of disability for family support. Date of desertion by husband and of indictment, if any, and of warrant for arrest if known.

(g) Date and place of divorce, if any, and grounds of same.

4. The court shall cause a copy of the petition provided for in section two and three hereof, and a notice of the time and place when it will be presented to the court, to be served on or mailed to the overseer of the poor or in the absence thereof the director of welfare of the county welfare board having jurisdiction over the district wherein the petitioner resides, the county adjuster of the county wherein the court has jurisdiction, the board of chosen freeholders thereof and the State Board of Children's Guardians at least twenty days before such time.

5. Immediately upon receipt of such notice and copy of the petition aforesaid, the State Board of Children's Guardians, through its district office embracing such county of petitioner's settlement, shall examine into the truth and merits of the petition and make an investigation of the home life conditions of the petitioner for the purpose of securing the following information:

(a) Whether the mother of the child is a widow.

(b) If the husband is living, whether he is an inmate of a penal institution, under sentence which will not terminate within one year from the date of petition, or is an inmate of a public institution for an illness requiring prolonged care, or under care for such illness in a private institution or incapacitated at home when such care in a public institution is not available, and such other care is in accordance with the recommendations of the medical director of the public institution to which application for care has been made, or is a deserter under indictment for desertion, or with an outstanding warrant issued against him for his arrest on the ground of desertion for a period of at least six months preceding date of filing petition and who has not been located for a period of at least one year preceding the date of filing of petition after diligent search, or is divorced from mother who has been unable to secure maintenance or support for such child through legal proceedings.

(c) Whether the dependency of the child is due to the poverty of the mother without wilful neglect on her part.

(d) Whether the mother is otherwise a proper person to have the custody and care of the child.

(e) Whether the home is a satisfactory place for the training and rearing of the child.

(f) Whether the petitioner if a natural mother or if not a natural mother the child has been a resident of the county for a period of at least five years next preceding the filing of the petition, or has been a resident of such county for a continuous period of at least five years and succeeding which a continuous resident of the State of New Jersey and for a period of not more than five years next preceding such application a resident of some other county.

(g) The names and addresses of any known relative or relatives having the legal responsibility for the support of such child or children, together with any pertinent facts as to such relatives' financial ability.

(h) What is the lowest amount, based upon a family budget, that is necessary to provide for support of such child or children.

6. Prior to the return day, the State Board of Children's Guardians shall, upon completion of the examination and investigation provided for under section five hereof, file a report of its findings with the court and the board of chosen freeholders, setting forth in full the results of said examination and investigation as provided for under section five hereof and upon such report being made and filed with the court, thereafter upon the return day fixed for the hearing, the court shall examine under oath all parties in interest who desire to be heard. The court may, in its discretion, issue subpoenas for the attendance of witnesses and adjourn the hearing from day to day, *and provided, however,* the court may refer said matter to the county adjuster or such other proper person as recommended by the board of chosen freeholders to be appointed upon reference by the court as a referee or commissioner to hear such witnesses as shall be produced by the petitioner, the board of chosen freeholders, and the State Board of Children's Guardians, and to consider the aforesaid report of findings of the State Board of Children's Guardians. Said referee or commissioner shall, within ten days following the hearing, make a report to the court setting forth the facts as proven before him, and notify the board of chosen freeholders and the State Board of Children's Guardians of his conclusions, whereupon, after a period of five days following such notification said report shall be confirmed by the court, provided no objection is made and entered thereto by the board of chosen freeholders or the State Board of Children's Guardians. The board of chosen freeholders aforesaid shall be entitled through its duly authorized representative to appear at such hearing and submit recommendations relative thereto, and shall also be entitled in its discretion and at its own expense to have taken a stenographic record of any such hearing aforesaid.

7. If, upon the completion of the investigation, examination and hearing provided for under section five and six hereof, the court shall find that the said petitioner is a widow or that support is not obtainable from her husband by reason of one of the alternatives specified in subdivision (b) of section five, together with findings in the affirmative upon the points specified in subdivision (c), (d), (e), (f) and that the petitioner has a settlement as defined in this act and that there is no relative having the legal responsibility and financial ability to support her child or children, and that unless relief is granted the mother will be unable properly to support and educate her children, and that they may become a public charge, it shall make an order committing said family to the care of the State Board of Children's Guardians, and directing that there shall be paid to the mother through the State Board of Children's

Guardians out of the county funds for the support of her children under sixteen, an amount in no case to exceed the amount recommended in subdivision (h) of the report of findings filed with the court, as provided for under section five hereof, the amount to be awarded to be, subject to the aforesaid limitation, discretionary with the court; *provided*, that any widow who is a mother of a child or children under the age of sixteen, and any mother, step-mother, or woman standing in loco parentis and assuming the responsibilities of a mother, who is eligible to receive relief pursuant to the provisions of this act, and who now is receiving or may hereafter receive relief pursuant to the provisions of this act, or the act of which this act is a revision, and who shall remain in or who shall remove to some other county other than the county in which she receives relief, such relief shall continue so long as such recipient of relief continues eligible thereto, pursuant to the provisions of this act, until she shall have resided for five years continuously in such other county, whereupon the relief first granted shall cease and said recipient of relief may thereupon or within a period of sixty days prior thereto file her petition for relief with any court of competent jurisdiction of the county in which she then resides. The court is also herein empowered to make an order, directing any relative having the legal responsibility for the support of such child or children and being of sufficient financial ability in the opinion of the court to so provide, to pay the entire cost for the support of such child or children, or any part thereof, in which latter event the balance of the amount required as hereinabove determined for the support of such child or children shall be paid to the mother through the State Board of Children's Guardians out of the county funds, and the order of the court directing such payment out of county funds shall be reduced accordingly in order that the total amount ordered paid shall in no event exceed the amount recommended by the State Board of Children's Guardians in subdivision (h) of its report of findings as provided for under section five hereof. The amount representing the support granted hereunder for any child under sixteen years of age shall cease and terminate upon such child attaining the age of sixteen, except in a case of special emergency, where upon the recommendation of the State Board of Children's Guardians, approved by the board of chosen freeholders, the court may make a special order temporarily extending such period of support.

8. It shall be the duty of the State Board of Children's Guardians to see that any widow or mother committed to its care, pursuant to the provisions of this act is properly caring for her children, that they are sufficiently clothed and fed, that they attend school regularly and receive proper religious instruction; and that said family shall be visited at least four times a year.

9. The State Board of Children's Guardians shall report immediately to the court that had the original jurisdiction in the case of any widow or mother who does not properly care for and educate her child or children, or when it finds that she is an improper guardian for said child or children, or when it finds that she no longer needs such support, or that she no longer has a settlement, or when any allowance, assistance, or support is or has been improperly granted or administered under the provisions of this act. Any person who has knowledge that any allowance, assistance or support as herein provided is being improperly granted or administered under this act, may file a complaint in writing with the State Board of Children's Guardians, setting forth the particulars of such violation. Upon receipt of such complaint the State Board of Children's Guardians shall make an investigation of the allegations set forth in such complaint; or, if at any time the State Board of Children's Guardians has reason to believe that any allowance, assistance or support has been or is being improperly granted or administered under this act, it shall immediately cause an investigation to be made, and may suspend or reduce payments of any future installments pending such investigation. Upon the completion of such investigation and filing of a report of its finding with the court, the court

shall thereupon make an order confirming or modifying the order complained of, or the court may, in its discretion, thereupon revoke or cancel any order pursuant to this act, and in lieu thereof make an order, subject to the limitations of this act, that in the judgment of the court may protect the welfare of the child or children, or may make an order committing such child or children to the care, custody and control of the New Jersey State Board of Children's Guardians, said child or children so committed to its care to be held by said New Jersey State Board of Children's Guardians, pursuant to chapter one hundred and forty-seven, laws of one thousand nine hundred and eighteen, being an act entitled "An act concerning the charitable, correctional, reformatory and penal institutions, boards and commissions, located and conducted in this State, which are supported in whole or in part from county, municipal or State funds," approved February twenty-eighth, one thousand nine hundred and eighteen, and the amendments and revisions thereof, and supplements thereto. If, upon the completion of such investigation aforesaid, the court is of the opinion that any suspended or reduced allowance, assistance or support was properly obtained and has been properly granted and administered under the provisions of this act, the court may forthwith make an order directing that any such suspended payments be thereupon paid.

10. No fees or costs shall be paid or allowed by the court for any proceedings held pursuant to this act, nor shall any counsel fee be ordered or collected from any party applying to the court pursuant to the provisions of this act, and all proceedings pursuant to this act shall be in forma pauperis; *provided, however*, that the court may in its discretion direct a medical examination of the petitioner and of any of the children or their father, and designate the county or other duly authorized and licensed physician of the county to make such examination; *and provided, further*, that all birth, death and marriage certificates required under the provisions of this act shall be issued free of charge upon the order of the county counsel, the probation officer or the State Board of Children's Guardians.

11. No recipient of relief, assistance or support, pursuant to the provisions of this act, while receiving the same, shall receive any other relief from the State, or any political subdivision thereof, except for medical and surgical assistance.

12. Any person who by means of a false statement or representation or by impersonation or other fraudulent device obtains or attempts to obtain or aids or abets any person to obtain any allowance, assistance, or support to which he is not entitled, under the provisions of this act, or a larger amount than that to which he is justly entitled, or payment of any suspended forfeited installment grant or allowance shall be guilty of a misdemeanor; or any person who knowingly aids or abets in buying, transferring or in any way disposing of any of the property of a petitioner, in order to qualify for relief, assistance or support under the provisions of this act, without the consent of the State Board of Children's Guardians, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and punished accordingly.

13. Any person who knowingly violates any provision of this act or any court order made pursuant to this act for which no penalty is specifically provided shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction thereof shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars or by imprisonment for not more than one year or by both such fine and imprisonment.

14. Nothing in this act shall be construed as repealing any other act or part of an act providing for the settlement, relief, assistance and support of the poor except in so far as inconsistent therewith. This act shall be liberally construed. Any part or parts of his act which may be found to be invalid or unconstitutional shall be severable, and the remainder of the act shall stand, and the provisions contained in this act shall not be construed to repeal other provisions of

the law not inconsistent herewith. Any particular grant of power contained in this act shall be held to be in specification but not in limitation of general powers. Nothing in this act shall operate to repeal or nullify the provisions of an act entitled "An act regulating the employment, tenure and discharge of certain officers and employees of this State and of the various counties and municipalities thereof, and providing for a civil service commission and defining its powers and duties," approved April tenth, one thousand nine hundred and eight, and the acts supplementary thereto and amendatory thereof.

15. All amounts paid as relief, assistance or support under the provisions of this act shall be exempt from any tax levied by the State or by any subdivision thereof, and exempt from levy and sale, garnishment, attachment, or any other process whatsoever and shall be inalienable in any form, and in case of bankruptcy or insolvency shall not pass to the receiver, trustee or other person acting on behalf of the creditors or the recipient of same.

16. No person receiving relief, assistance or support under this act shall be deemed to be or classified as a pauper by reason thereof.

17. This act shall take effect immediately.