

*Food Stamps.*—This program, which makes it possible for welfare and other low-income families to obtain more food for their money, was extended to Cattaraugus, Clinton, Niagara, Wayne, and Wyoming Counties and the City of Jamestown, Erie County has been in the program since 1966, and Schoharie County will be added in July 1968.

*Welfare Appeals.*—A sharp rise occurred in the number of appeals welfare recipients and applicants have made to the State Department of Social Services from decisions of local departments. From a total of 650 in 1966 the number increased to more than 4,200 in 1967, approximately 3,300 of which originated in New York City, where organized welfare recipient groups have been campaigning for better welfare grants and services.

*Simplifying Welfare.*—A demonstration project in New York City is testing the feasibility of determining eligibility for public assistance on the basis of an affidavit or declaration form, somewhat similar to an income tax form in that it lists the income and other resources of the applicant, if any. Full-scale investigation would be made of one of every 20 accepted applications, instead of every application, which is the current practice.

*Improving Welfare Administration.*—Representative efforts to increase efficiency in welfare operations include:

A project being carried out with the State Division of the Budget to have local services departments develop annual work plans which the State can use as a guide in supervision and evaluation of operations.

Installation of data processing systems in Rockland and Sullivan Counties as a pilot project to determine whether such equipment can be used productively in 40 other local departments.

Development of a uniform billing system which will enable all providers of medical services—hospitals, physicians, dentists, and others—to use the same billing procedure. Heretofore many of the 64 local departments had their own procedures, and providers of medical services had to use several different methods and different forms, in billing for their services, depending upon where the patients lived.

Indoctrination of new welfare employees has been expedited and improved through the use of six films and videotapes. Entitled "Human Factors and Social Services," these training materials are being used in social services departments and on closed-circuit educational TV.

*Rehabilitating Delinquent Children.*—A new approach to helping delinquent children through out-of-institution care was started in 1967. Responsibility for parole services was transferred from the State training schools, where they had constituted a supplementary function, to two major Community Services Bureaus, which concentrate on parole as one of their major functions. One of the bureaus serves New York City and nine nearby counties, while the other covers the remaining counties.

Among the measures taken to provide a more comprehensive program of community-based services under the supervision of the bureaus are:

(1) Expansion of direct care resources, including group residences (14 to 20 children), group homes (seven to ten children), and boarding homes (one to six children);

(2) Extension of casework units into large urban counties; and

(3) Decentralization of casework units in New York City into neighborhood locations.

As part of the change-over, the Division of Children's Services will operate three New York City facilities formerly operated by the State Division for Youth: two group homes and a START (Short Term Adolescent Resident Training) center for girls.

*More Help for the Blind.*—The Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped sponsored the college enrollment of 262 blind students, who received assistance ranging from the use of tape recorders to payment of tuition; made special efforts to get employment for blind social workers and vocational rehabilitation counselors; expanded vocational opportunities for the blind through establishment of vending stands at rehabilitation centers of the Narcotics Addiction Control Commission; and worked with the State Education Department in planning vision-screening programs for preschool children in the State.

*Locating Deserting Parents.*—The Bureau of Registry and Location of Deserting Parents got information on the whereabouts of more than 9,000 deserting parents, and in 3,600 additional cases it turned up other information that was useful in effecting parental financial responsibility for the care of children.