§ 138-a. Responsibility of the department for recipients in family care. 1. Any inconsistent provision of this chapter or other law notwithstanding, the department shall be responsible for furnishing public assistance and care to mentally disabled persons residing in family care homes licensed by the office of mental health or the office for people with developmental disabilities who are admitted to such facilities in accordance with regulations of the office which licenses the facility. However, the department may, at its option, discharge such responsibility, in whole or in part, through social services districts designated to act as agents of the department. While so designated, a social services district shall act as agent of the department and shall be entitled to reimbursement as provided in section one hundred fifty-three of this article.

2. The department shall possess and may exercise like powers and perform like duties in respect to the assistance and care of persons in family care as social services officials exercise and perform in relation to persons in their respective jurisdictions.