

Office of Child and Family Services Quarterly Child Welfare Update

Health and Human Services Committee

March 27, 2024

Director Bobbi Johnson



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Office of Child and Family Services

Child Welfare: Strategic Priorities 2023-2026

Safety

Improve the Consistency and Quality of CPS Intake Screening Decisions

Improve the Consistency and Quality of Child Protective Investigations

Permanency and Well-being

Improve the Consistency, Quality, and Timeliness of Permanency for Children in Care

Improve the Quality of the Health and Well-being of Children in Care

Consistency

Achieve the Goals Outlined in the CFSR/PIP Measurement Plan by January 2024

Strengthen the Child Welfare Workforce Through Efforts to Improve Recruitment, Retention, and Support

Foundational Principals

Family, Youth, and Resource Parent Engagement

Race, Equity, Diversity, and Accessibility

Collaboration with Internal and External Partners to Identify and Address Systemic Barriers

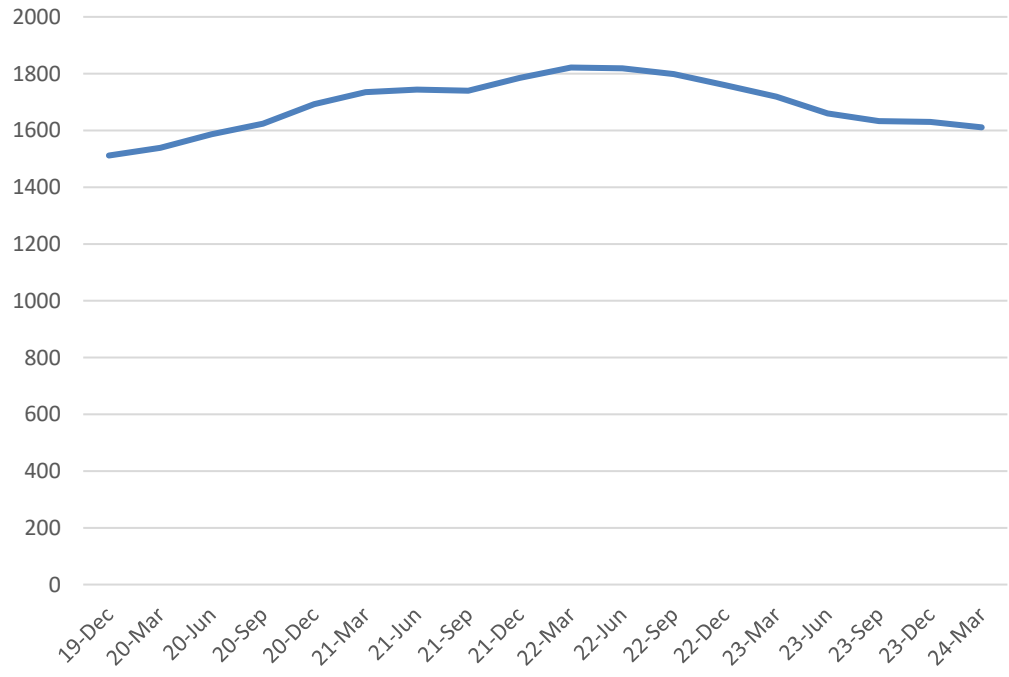
Child Welfare's Role When Removal Occurs

Placement Type	Maine – Percent <i>(February 2024)</i>
Traditional Foster Care	44%
Relative/Kinship Care	41%
Therapeutic Foster Care	4%
Trial Home Placement	4%
Adoption	4%
Residential	< 2%
Other	< 2%

- OCFS convenes Permanency Review Teams (PRT) to review outcomes for children in state custody after six months.
 - Review team includes the Caseworker, Supervisor, Program Administrator, a note taker, and a facilitator (a Supervisor not associated with the case), as well as any others deemed appropriate.
 - During the review, staff discuss the current permanency goals, how reunification is proceeding (if reunification is the current case goal), and what work has been completed towards ensuring the child has a permanent home if reunification is unsuccessful or no longer the case goal (also known as concurrent planning).
 - During these meetings, a plan with action steps is developed. The goal of the plan is to put permanency at the forefront and ensure staff have the tools and guidance they need to overcome barriers to meeting permanency goals.

Resource Families

Number of Licensed Resource (Foster) Homes



- Increased foster home & therapeutic foster home reimbursement rate by 5% (effective 7/1/23 for regular foster care and 10/25/23 for therapeutic foster care)
- Working with MaineCare to improve the approach to therapeutic foster care by including a level for Therapeutic Intensive Home based on the evidence-based model Therapeutic Foster Care-Oregon.
 - Initial Rate Determination public meeting held December 6, 2023
- Director has scheduled town hall meetings with resource parents for this month and will continue this practice going forward.

Hotel and Emergency Department Data

Youth in Emergency Departments or Hotels with Child Welfare Involvement Quarter 1, Calendar Year 2024

District	ED	Average Days in ED	Hotel	Average Days in Hotel	Where was youth placed after hotel/ED?			
					Resource Family	CRCF	Psychiatric Hospital	Other
1	4	3	1	34	1	3	0	0
2	0	0	2	10.5	1	0	0	1
3	11	4.2	2*	4	4	1	7	0
4	3	1.2	2	19.5	2	1	1	1
5	2	1.5	5	4.4	5	0	2	0
6	5	0	0	0	3	0	2	0
7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
8	5	4.2	0	0	1	1	3	0

Policy Updates

In Review/Revision

Relative Placement & Kinship Care
Children's Emergency Services (CES)
Decision Making and Service Authorization
Determining Access to Department Records
Discovery
Legal
Placement
Psychotropic Medication
Safety Planning (new stand-alone policy versus current embedded policy)
Working with Families with Substance Use Disorder
Child Protective Investigation
Residential Services Policy and Procedures
Respite Care
Family Share
Methamphetamine Exposure
Safety Planning

In Final Review

Adoption
Child Protective Intake
Human Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation
Caseworker Contact
Safe Sleep Checklist and Period of Purple Crying
Child Abuse and Neglect Findings
Use of Expert Consultation in Assessing Child Abuse or Neglect
Short Term Emergency Services
Transportation
Refugee, Immigrant, and Undocumented Minors

Completed

Background Checks
Collaboration
Domestic Abuse and Violence
Entry into Care
Family Team Meetings
Immunization of Children in Custody
Indian Child Welfare (ICW)
Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children
LGBTQIA+
Missing and Runaway Youth
Permanency
Placement with DHHS Employees
Resource Home Licensing
Safe Haven
Staff Safety and Critical Safety Cases
Supervision
Substance Exposed Infants
Youth Transition Services
Audio Recording Policy

New since last report

Completed since last report

Psychotropic Medication Settlement

Three key agreed-upon improvements:

1. Improvement to medical records maintained by the Department to include a portable health record that moves with the child and is regularly updated.
2. Updated informed consent process.
3. Creation of a psychiatric clinical review team to conduct reviews of psychotropic medication prescriptions.

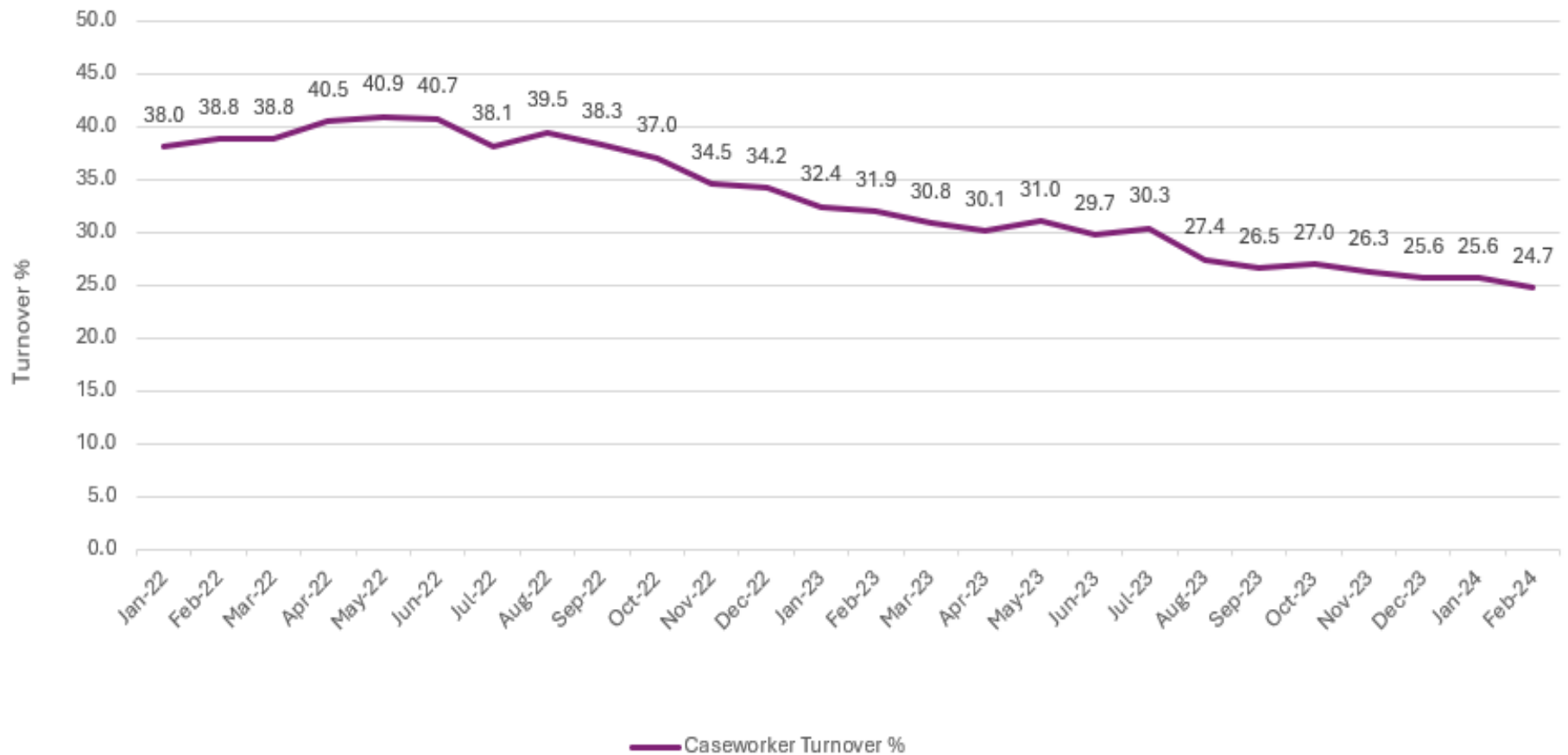
Staffing Update

Point in Time	Dec 2018	Dec 2019	Dec 2020	Dec 2021	Dec 2022	Dec 2023	Mar 2024	Net Change 2019-Now
Total Positions	351	365	398	414	445	445	445	+94/ +27%
# Filled	327	345	348	378	388	362	385	+58/ +18%
# Vacancies	24	20	14	36	57	83	60	
% Vacancies	5.4%	5.5%	3.5%	8.7%	12.8%	18.6%	13.5%	

Year over Year	March 2023	March 2024
Positions Filled / Total	378 / 445	385 (+7) / 445
Vacancies Number / Percent	67 / 15.1%	60 / 13.5% (-1.6%)

Staffing Update

12-month Rolling Average Turnover



Staff Support

- Working with Public Consulting Group (PCG) to conduct a review of the caseload/workload analysis previously completed to capture policy and procedure changes impacting the caseload and workload analysis in OCFS' Workload Analytic Tool.
 - This work will also include Community Care Workers, Case Aides, and clerical staff to assist OCFS is properly distributing those staff among the District offices.
- Working with stakeholders (including strong staff representation, as well as those with lived experience in the child welfare system) to update policies related to Children's Emergency Services (CES), safety planning, and placement of children.
- Conducting District visits to continue conversations with staff and elicit their feedback about key child welfare practices and challenges.
- Completing the Rapid Management Audit to examine OCFS' organizational and leadership structure, communication, and culture and how best to support staff.
- Recognizing the key role that support staff play and supporting LD 2097, *Resolve, to Establish a Pilot Project to Alleviate the Staffing Crisis in the Child Protective Services System.*

Budget Updates

- Implemented Recruitment and Retention Payments for OCFS child welfare staff using \$2 million in salary savings from existing personnel services funding. Includes three one-time lump sum payments of \$1,000 distributed over the course of 2024.
- Increased stipend for child welfare staff from \$5.00 to \$7.50 per hour.
- Supplemental Budget Proposals:
 - \$1.3 million to support full implementation of the Treatment Foster Care Oregon (TFC-O) program.
 - Creation of new three additional Legal Secretary positions (allowing for one per District)
 - Establishment of eight Onboarding and Training Coaches (one per District) to assist in onboarding and training new staff and support the ongoing training of all District staff.
 - Creation of an additional Assistant Program Administrator (APA) role in the Lewiston District office.
 - Reclassification of Child Welfare Caseworkers and Supervisors to increase compensation to properly reflect the difficulty and complexity of child welfare work.

Legislative and Budget Implementation Updates

- LD 594 (P.L. 2023, ch. 62) – *Resolve, to Review the Resource Parent Bill of Rights* – Report completed.
- 48 Customer Representative Associate II - Human Services positions were reclassified to CPS Case Aides in October (raised the minimum pay from \$15.85 per hour to \$17.42 per hours, with the top pay step now at \$23.32 per hour).
- State Forensic Service will assume authority over Court Ordered Diagnostic Evaluations (CODE) program beginning in summer of 2024
- LD 2049 (P.L. 2023, ch. 542) – *An Act to Increase Safety for Child Welfare Services Workers* – Exempts OCFS state-vehicles from the requirement of displaying special registration plates. OCFS is working with Secretary of State and Fleet Management to prepare for implementation on the effective date.
- LD 2095 (P.L. 2023, ch. 518) – *An Act to Require Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect to Military Family Advocacy Programs* – Updates to affected policies underway and OCFS is actively working with the Portsmouth Navy installation on establishing the required MOU.

Katahdin

System Improvement Successes

- Implementation of updated Discovery Print
- Access to single Client History involvement timeline
- Enhanced structure for caseworker notes
- Improvement in connection between new reports and ongoing investigations
- Reciprocal relationships between family members
- Improved design and accessibility of data dashboards for staff
- Improvement to system's search functionality to improve information accessibility

New Opportunities for Enhancement

- Improving quick access to detailed abuse findings and case summary information
- Streamlining the input of client Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) records
- Reducing areas that require duplicate entry for common fields
- Investigating areas where a change to system limitations in terms of character-limits and field types may be beneficial
- Improved system for uploading and downloading multi-section attachments for related documents

Questions

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Office of Child and Family Services

