

Office of Child and Family Services Legislative Orientation

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Office of Child and Family Services

The Office of Child and Family Services (OCFS) works in partnership with the community to ensure all Maine children and families are safe, stable, happy, and healthy. The Office is made up of several different divisions:

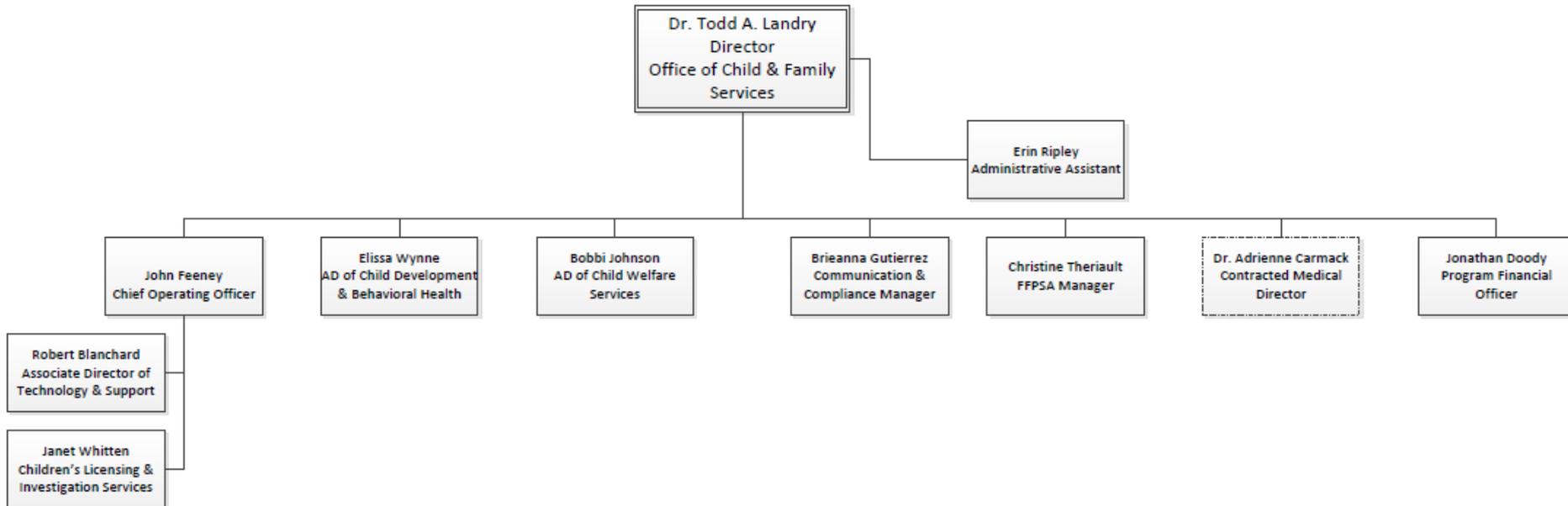
Child Welfare – Seeking safety, well-being, and permanent homes for children by investigating reports of suspected child abuse and neglect on behalf of Maine communities, working to ensure the well-being of children by guiding families as they create safe homes for their children, and providing temporary care for children when needed. Child welfare also includes Maine’s Office of Violence Prevention, which provides support and funding to domestic violence and sexual assault organizations across the state.

Children’s Behavioral Health Services – Supporting Maine families and children to access high-quality evidence-based behavioral health services. Assisting providers who serve children and families with behavioral health services to ensure programs are evidence-based and accessible.

Early Childhood Education and Child Care – Overseeing Maine’s Child Care Subsidy program, which provides financial support to qualifying families to access child care while the parents work or attend an educational program. Supports quality improvement in child care programs through professional development opportunities for staff and the Maine Roads to Quality program which provides technical support to providers as they seek to meet key quality benchmarks.

Children’s Licensing and Investigation Services – Licenses, monitors, and investigates all types of agencies that provide care for children, including child care providers, children’s residential facilities, and homeless shelters for youth. This division is responsible for ensuring the safety and well-being of children in all licensed out-of-home settings.

OCFS Organizational Chart



All Maine Children & Families

**SAFE, STABLE,
HAPPY, HEALTHY**

Policy Initiatives

Family First

- Implementation of the Federal Family First Prevention Services Act by October 2021
- Supporting provider to ensure compliance with Family First Requirements
- Collaborating to expand existing and establish new evidence-based services to prevent the need for removal of a child
- This initiative is, in part, contingent on the related ARP changes (below)

Alternative Response Program (ARP)

- In conjunction with implementation of Family First, ending the ARP and redirecting the funds spent on that program to hire 15 additional caseworkers to complete the child protective work previously done by ARP
- Funds will also be used to support Federally supported and funded evidence-based services intended to prevent the need for removal of a child

Early Childhood Education

- Ensuring compliance with the Federal Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) through changes to rules and enactment of fingerprint-based background checks for providers
- Implementation of Maine's Early Childhood Consultation Partnership (ECCP) to provide early childhood mental health consultations in pilot Counties.

CCWIS

- Providing for full funding required for the development and implementation of the Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System (CCWIS)
- Development of CCWIS was initiated in 2018 when the Legislature provided a directive and initial funding for the system. Budget initiatives to be considered this year will provide the remainder of the funding required

COVID-19

- Supporting staff and providers as they ensure services during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Regularly updated guidance for OCFS staff, CBHS providers, child care providers, resource parents, etc.
- Weekly data reports on OCFS-specific data trends during the pandemic

Family First Prevention Services Act Focus Areas

Prevention Services
for Children and
Families

IV-E

Increased Quality &
Appropriateness of
Residential Care

Prevention of foster care placements
through:

- Trauma informed and evidenced based services including: mental health & substance abuse prevention and treatment services, in-home parent skill-based programs, and kinship navigator services

Improving the well-being of children already in foster care by reducing placement of children in group care settings and enhancing quality of care for residential treatment programs. Establishment of Qualified Residential Treatment Programs (QRTP)

FFPSA: Theory of Change

THEORY OF CHANGE

Root Cause: Limited availability of preventative services can make it challenging for at risk families to maintain their children safely in the home leading to children entering foster care.

Goal: Increase prevention services available to families that will help address domestic violence, mental health, substance use, and parenting challenges through agency collaboration, utilization of evidenced based practice, and workforce support.

So that families can receive support and treatment to meet their needs;

So that there is enhanced safety and positive parenting;

So that children can remain safely in their home.

Prevention Services

Who

Eligibility:

- A child who is a victim of maltreatment in which safety and risk factors can be mitigated by the provision of in-home services and is able to safely remain at home with a child-specific Prevention Plan.
- Pregnant and Parenting Foster Youth
- Children who have exited foster care through reunification, guardianship, or adoptions and may be at risk of re-entry.

What

Services:

- Mental Health
- Substance Use Prevention and Treatment
- In Home Skill Based Parenting Support

That are....

- Evidenced Based
- Time Limited
- Trauma Informed
- Not already covered by MaineCare

How

Prevention Planning:

- Structured Decision making helps OCFS to identify candidates.
- A Prevention Services Family Plan will be completed with the family through the Family Team Meeting process. The plan will outline what services will be provided to the family to keep the child/ren safe in the home.
- The plan is reviewed every 90 days

Federally-Approved Evidence-Based Services Under Family First

Methadone Maintenance Therapy – MaineCare funds service.

Substance Use Disorder

Kinship Navigator

Mental Health Services

In-Home Parent Skill Building Services

- **Functional Family Therapy (FFT)** – MaineCare funds service
- **Multisystemic Therapy (FFT)** – MaineCare funds service
- **Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT)** – MaineCare funds service
- **The Incredible Years** – MaineCare funds service
- **Parent Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT)** – MaineCare funds service
- **Triple P – Positive Parenting Program** - MaineCare funds service

No kinship navigator programs have been federally approved at this time. Once evidence-based kinship navigator programs are identified, Maine will explore implementation through IV-E

- **Parents as Teachers (PAT)** – IV-E and State General Fund dollars fund the service that is currently provided as part of Maine’s Home visiting Program
- **Homebuilders** – IV-E and State General Fund dollars will provide for development and implementation statewide.

New Standards for Residential Treatment: Qualified Residential Treatment Programs(QRTP)

In order for states to receive Federal Title IV-E reimbursement for residential programs, the placement must meet QRTP standards

Updates to Children's Residential Licensing Rules to ensure compliance with QRTP requirements.

- Placement assessment within 30 days by a "Qualified Individual"
- Family engagement/involvement including siblings
- Have registered or licensed nursing staff and other licensed clinical staff available 24/7
- Provide discharge planning and family-based aftercare support for at least 6 months post-discharge
- Use trauma-informed treatment model
- Program must be licensed and accredited
- Fingerprint based criminal background checks must be completed on all staff

Allows OCFS to continue to pull down \$800k in federal funding for children in state custody who are receiving care in a residential treatment facility

Family First Prevention Services Act: Planning

- FFPSA Stakeholder Groups (and sub-committees) convened from March to December 2020.
 - Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTP)
 - Evidenced Based Practice
 - Candidacy
 - Workforce / Training
- Internal OCFS meetings convened to develop processes and procedures for various aspects of the law.
- Communication strategies included: presentations, webinars, website development, fact sheet creation, informational sessions.
- Collaborations were key and included: other state offices, other states, community providers, youth, parents, tribes, New Mainers, etc.

Family First Prevention Services Act: Planning

- Data Collection and Analysis: to assist with decision making and prioritization
- Fiscal Planning: Title IV-E, Budget Initiative planning
- Procedure drafts: QRTP, Candidacy, Family Prevention Planning, Logic Models,
- FFPSA State Plan Drafted and feedback collected (2 webinars with over 150 participants, presentations to OCFS Staff, parents, youth, stakeholders, etc.)
- Maine's FFPSA State plan: In final draft and review process

Family First Prevention Services Act: Next Steps

- Submission to Administration for Children and Families: By end of January 2021.
- State Plan dissemination to the public: By end of January 2021.
- Implementation of FFPSA: Fall of 2021 with infrastructure building, pilots, training to begin in spring and summer 2021.
- An implementation stakeholder workgroup will be created and convene throughout the year with continued youth and parent engagement and cultural and racial inclusion.
- Upon federal approval of state plan, OCFS policies will be updated.
- Training of staff will coincide with training on new CCWIS system.
- QRTP plan to be submitted in Spring/Summer 2021, with implementation in the Fall of 2021.

Alternative Response Program and Family First

ARP

- Concerns regarding ARP:
 - Disparate experience of families depending on whether a report is referred to ARP or the District for investigation
 - Desire to eliminate disparities and ensure equity for families referred to the system by providing a child welfare investigation in all appropriate reports

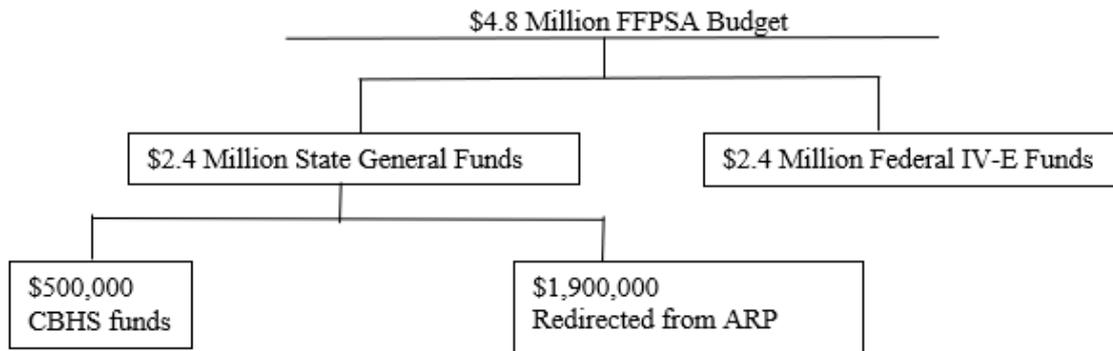
Family First

- OCFS implementing Family First (planned for 10/1/21)
- Focus on evidence-based services to prevent entry into care for children who meet definition of “candidate for foster care”
- Introduction of new evidence-based services (Homebuilders) as well as expansion of current evidence-based Parents as Teachers programming in Maine

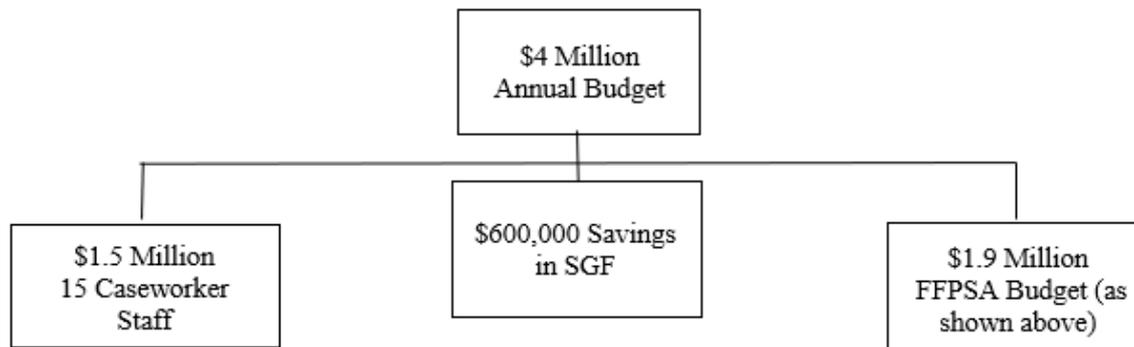
Budget Initiative

- Add 15 new caseworkers to ensure adequate staffing to complete investigations in appropriate reports previously referred to ARP.
- End ARP and redirect funds to Family First programming to strengthen, promote, and provide evidence-based services to children and families with the goal of preventing the need for entry into foster care.

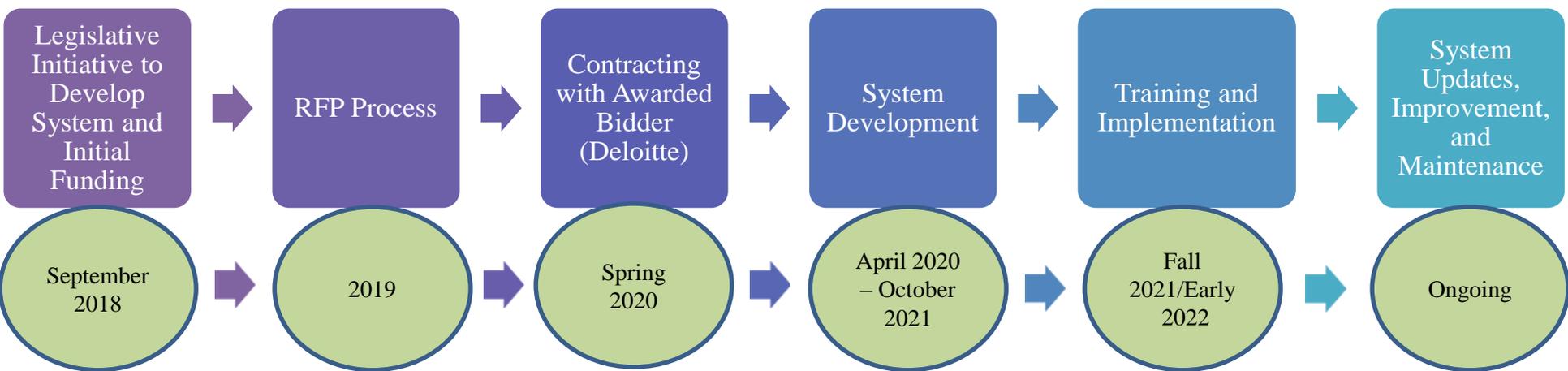
Family First Funding



OCFS is proposing the redirect of the existing \$4 million annual placeholder in the budget to fund Family First services, support caseworkers taking back all Alternative Response Cases (current ARP contracts) and create a \$600,000 State General Fund savings (annualized). Cost savings will be less in the first fiscal year as OCFS plans to continue ARP through the end of the contracts in December 2021 to allow adequate time for transition of services.



Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System (CCWIS)



Children's Behavioral Health Priorities and Initiatives

CBHS System Improvement Strategies

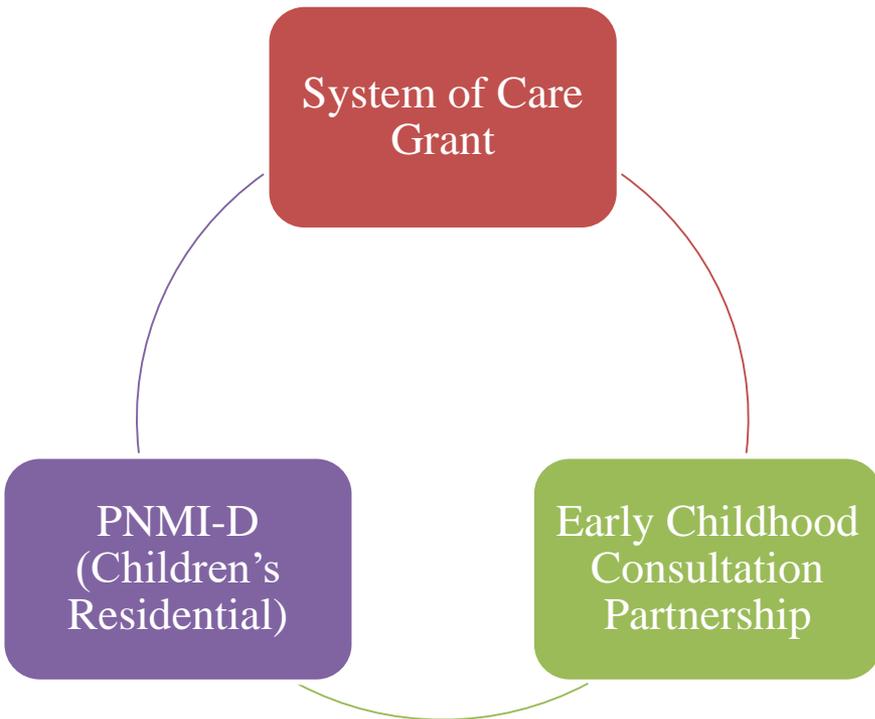
Short-Term (2019-2022)

- Hire a full-time, on-site OCFS Medical director (completed)
- Facilitate access to parent support services
- Explore options to amend current service definition for Section 28
- Clarify CBHS roles, responsibilities, procedures, policies, and practices
- Establish one or more Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities (PRTF)

Long-Term (2019-2025)

- Address shortages in the behavioral health care workforce
- Align residential services to best practices and federal quality standards
- Improve CBHS crisis services
- Expand the use of evidence-based models and evidence informed interventions
- Enhance the skills of the early childhood education workforce to address challenging behaviors
- Explore a statewide or regional “single point of access”
- Revise waitlist process
- Improve coordination for transition aged youth's behavioral health services

Children's Behavioral Health Initiatives



System of Care Grant (SOC)

- Four-year, \$8.5 million federally funded grant
- Improve behavioral health services available to youth in their homes and communities
- First year of grant focused in three historically underserved counties: Aroostook, Penobscot, and Piscataquis
- Initiatives:
 - Family and youth engagement and support by hiring a Youth Peer Specialist and Parent Peer Specialist in each county to provide direct support to youth and families as they navigate the system
 - Quality improvement and quality assurance oversight
 - Clinical coordination and implementation of a standardized psychosocial needs assessment
 - Increased focus on evidence-based practices
 - Workforce development
 - Standardized data collection and data-driven decisions

Early Childhood Consultation Partnership (ECCP)

- LD 997 (2019) provided legislative authorization and funding to implement an early childhood consultation program in five pilot sites.
- Program provides guidance, support, and training to improve early childhood educators and incorporates families as well.
- Evidence informed model selected for implementation in 2020 and the process for procuring vendors for the service initiated

PNMI-D (Children's Residential)

- Partnering with MaineCare to complete rate study to ensure proper funding to cover the cost of providing the service
- Placeholder in budget proposal for likely rate increase

Child Care Provider Background Check Licensing

10-148 CMR Chapter 34

- New comprehensive background check rule for licensed child care providers that adds provisions that are in compliance with State and Federal statutory requirements.
- Rule adds requirements to pre-employment and pre-licensure comprehensive background checks for licensed child care providers including:
 - Fingerprinting with search of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and State Bureau of Identification (SBI) records
 - National Crime Information Center (NCIC) National Sex Offender Registry
 - State child abuse and neglect registries/databases including out-of-state residences within the previous 5 years
 - State sex offender registries in each state where the individual has resided in the previous five years
- OCFS has provided financial and technical support to providers to assist in implementation, as well as collaborating with providers to provide information on this initiative, solicit feedback, and make improvements where possible

Family Child Care Providers Licensing

10-148 CMR Chapter 33

- Proposed rulemaking repeals 10-144 CMR Ch. 33 and replaces it with 10-148 CMR Ch. 33, Family Child Care Provider Licensing Rule
- Proposed changes are necessary to fully comply with the federal requirements of the 2014 reauthorization of the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG)
 - Includes provisions necessary to meet the health and safety needs of children
 - Requires compliance with the Child Care Provider Background Check Licensing Rule, 10-148 C.M.R Ch. 34
 - Removes and modifies provisions of the current rule to streamline requirements and processes
 - Adds a requirement for registration with Maine's Professional Development Network and with Maine's Quality Rating Improvement System

Child Care Facility Licensing Rule

10-148 CMR Chapter 32

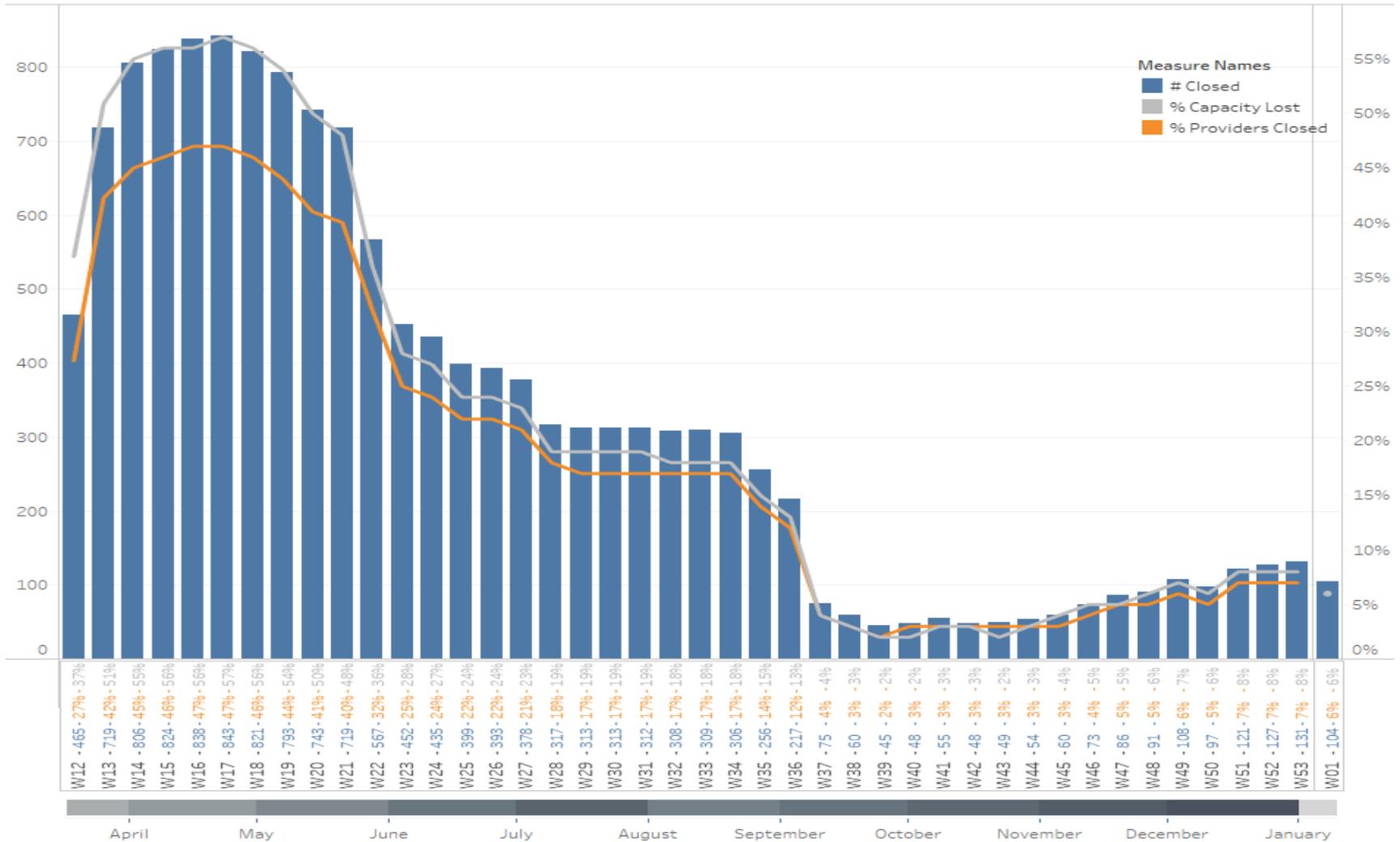
- OCFS proposes to repeal 10-148 CMR Chapter 32, *Rules for the Licensing of Child Care Facilities* (Effective Date: August 27, 2008) and 10-148 CMR Chapter 36 *Rules for the Licensing of Nursery Schools* (Effective Date: September 27, 2004) and replace the two existing rules with 10-148 CMR Ch. 32, *Child Care Facility Licensing Rule*.
- Proposed changes are necessary for Maine to come into compliance with the 2014 reauthorization requirements of the Child Care Development Block Grant. Additional proposed changes incorporate current national standards and best practices in an effort to enhance health and safety and support child development.
- Proposed changes also provide clarity and transparency by modernizing language and ensuring consistency in licensing requirements.

OCFS COVID-19 Response: Child Care

- Maine received nearly \$11 million in Federal Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) funding under the Federal CARES Act.
 - Approximately \$10 million of this funding was made available directly to child care providers through stipends and grants, while the remaining funds were used to provide qualifying essential workers with child care subsidy, from April to June of this year.
 - 1,645 licensed programs received at least one of the stipends or grants (98% of all providers received at least one grant). 47 license-exempt providers received funds through the first grant initiative.
- An additional \$8.4 million in Coronavirus Relief Funds (CRF) was made available by the Mills' Administration to support the child care industry by providing reimbursement for COVID-19 related business costs not already covered by other initiatives, grants, or programs.
 - 579 providers received over \$2.2 million in reimbursements under this CRF initiative.
- Regularly updated guidance to child care providers regarding policies and procedures designed to protect the health and safety of staff, children, and families.
- OCFS anticipates receiving approximately \$30 million in additional CCDBG funding as a result of the most recent Federal relief bill passed at the end of December. OCFS is working to develop overarching goals for the use of these funds but will not finalize any plans until we receive notice of the grant award amount and any conditions placed on it by the Federal government.

OCFS COVID-19: Child Care Data

CHILD CARE CLOSURES



OCFS COVID-19 Response: Child Welfare

Intake

- All staff working remotely
- Pre-screening health questions asked at the time of report

Investigation

- Conduct pre-screening prior to in-person meetings
- For several weeks at the beginning of the pandemic, OCFS had a two-tiered process for investigation
- Since June, all investigations are conducted in-person unless the pre-screening questions at Intake or prior to caseworker contact with the family indicate otherwise

Monthly Contacts

- Monthly contacts with parents, children/youth, and resource parents
- Received federal guidance from the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) that contacts completed by video conferencing could be considered face-to-face for federal reporting purposes
- OCFS staff resumed in-person meetings in June to complete monthly contacts when safely possible

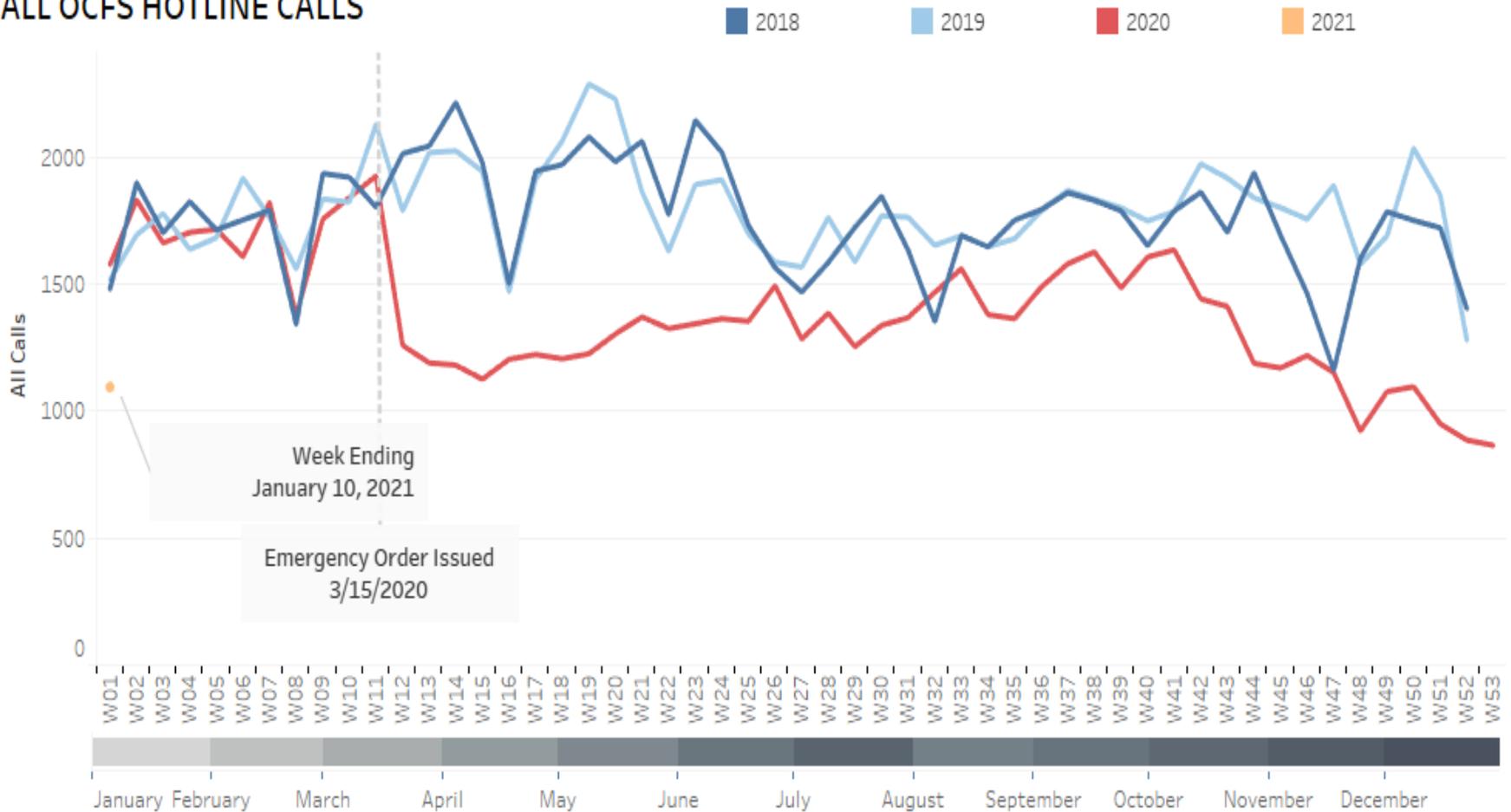
Visitation

- In-person visits suspended during the Governor's stay at home order
- Visits continued to occur through phone and video conferencing
- In-person visits resumed 6/8/2020 with safety precautions in place

- Child welfare leadership worked with DOE to develop and share guidance for identifying signs of abuse and neglect while interacting remotely
- Closely monitored data to identify trends, reported updated data weekly

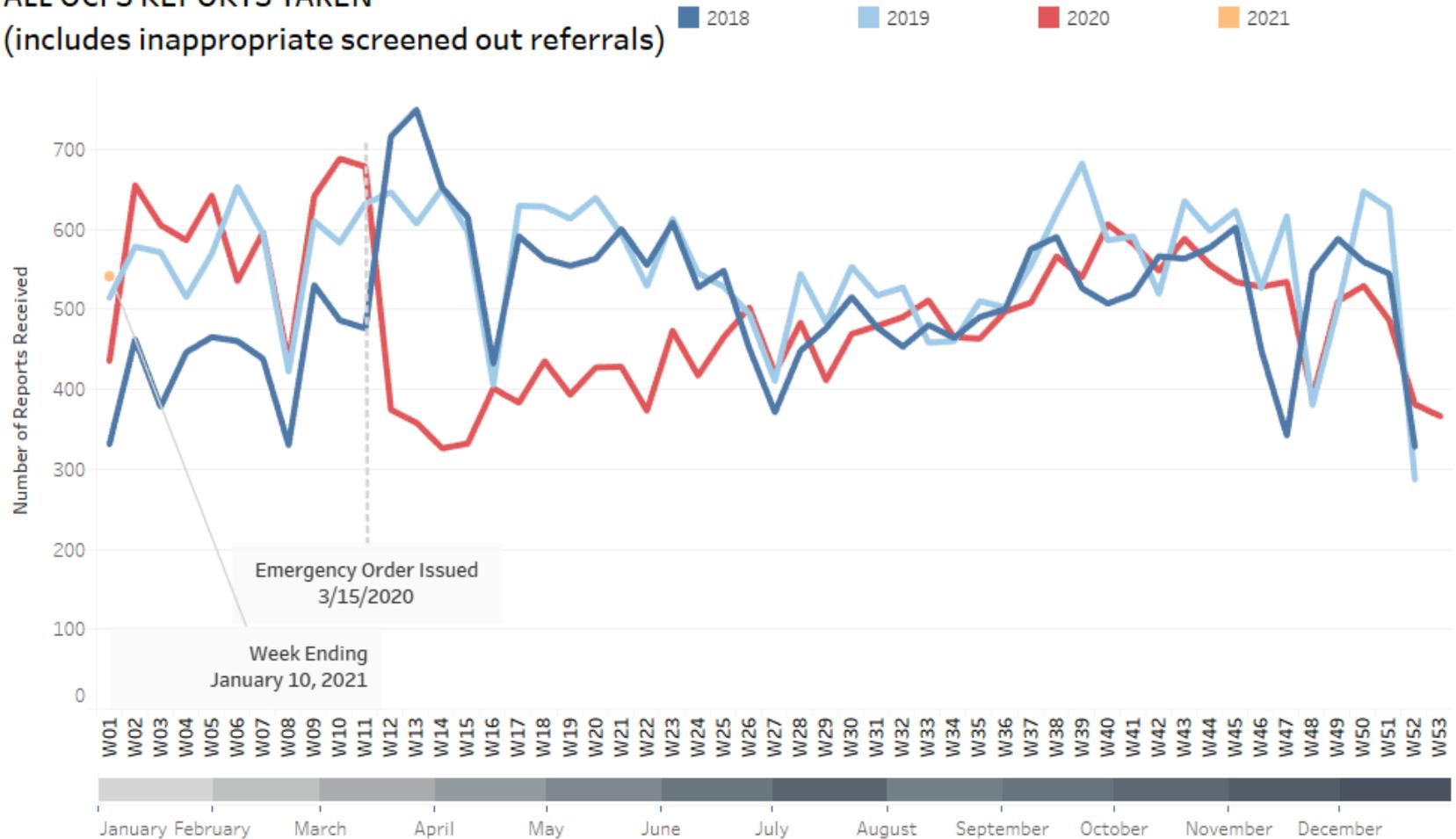
OCFS COVID-19: Child Welfare Data

ALL OCFS HOTLINE CALLS



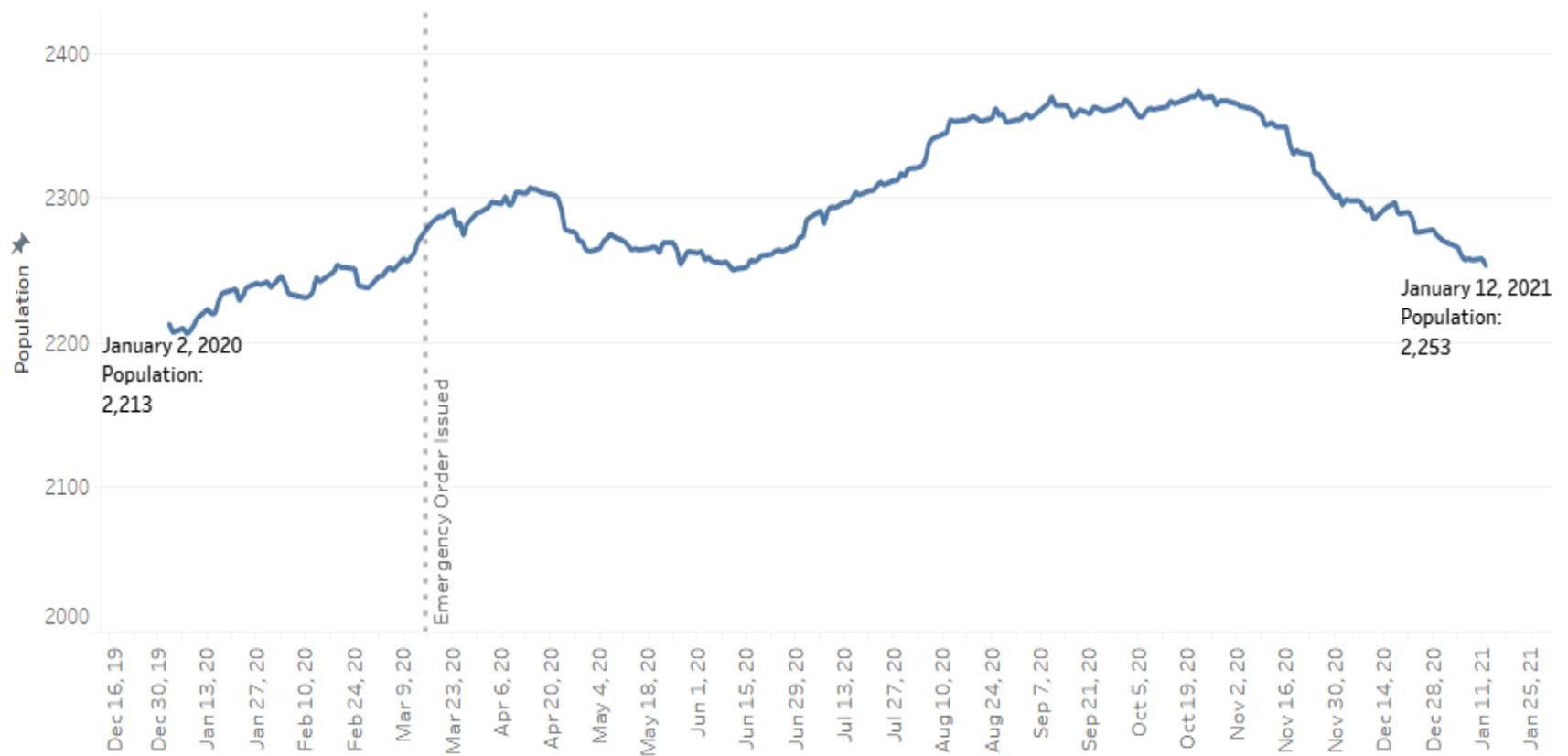
OCFS COVID-19: Child Welfare Data

ALL OCFS REPORTS TAKEN
(includes inappropriate screened out referrals)



OCFS COVID-19: Child Welfare Data

CHILDREN IN DHHS CUSTODY (POINT IN TIME) TREND 2020



Questions?

Director Todd A. Landry, Ed.D.
Office of Child and Family Services

