



**ARIZONA**  
DEPARTMENT  
*of* CHILD SAFETY

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Mike Faust, Director  
Douglas A. Ducey, Governor

December 31, 2019

The Honorable Regina Cobb  
Chairman, Joint Legislative Budget Committee  
Arizona State Senate  
1700 West Washington  
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

Re: Department of Child Safety Quarterly Benchmark Progress Report

Dear Chairman Cobb:

Pursuant to Laws 2019, First Regular Session, Chapter 263, Sec. 19, the Department submits its report on the progress made increasing the number of filled FTE positions, meeting the caseload standard and reducing the number of backlog cases and out-of-home children for the first quarter of FY 2020.

If you have any questions, please contact our office at (602) 255-2500.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Faust", written over a horizontal line.

Mike Faust  
Director

Enclosure

cc: Richard Stavneak, Director, Joint Legislative Budget Committee  
Representative David Gowan, Chairman, Joint Legislative Budget Committee  
Matt Gress, Director, Governor's Office and Strategic Planning and Budgeting  
Patrick Moran, Joint Legislative Budget Committee  
Yan Gao, Governor's Office and Strategic Planning and Budgeting

# DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SAFETY



## Quarterly Progress Report (Filling FTE Positions and Reducing the Inactive)

Report Date: December 31, 2019  
Reporting Period: FY2020, Quarter 1

## **INTRODUCTION**

Pursuant to Laws 2019, First Regular Session, Chapter 263, Section 141, the Arizona Department of Child Safety (DCS) is required to continue this report through June 2020. Previous versions of this report required that data be reported on the last day of the quarter of the reporting period. This did not allow the Department time to run data as of the last day of the quarter and still have reasonable time to compile, review and publish this report. This obligated the Department to report lagging data for the out-of-home (OOH) population, full time employee (FTE) data that is partial for the last month of the quarter, and inactive case data that effective only through the third week of the last month of the reporting period. Beginning September 2019, the Department submits this report covering data for the prior quarter.

Additionally, during the third and fourth quarters of state fiscal year 2019 (FY19), DCS was progressively realigning the five Regions. This action was necessary and driven by several factors. Chief among them were the growth and distribution of the population inside not only Maricopa County but also Pima, Pinal and Yavapai Counties. The logistics of providing case management and services in northern Arizona and other rural areas of Arizona were also a consideration. The implementation of these changes were footnoted in the March and June 2019 version of this report.

The Regional realignment resulted in changes in the regional names, reassignment of several counties to new regions; and moving specific sections and units to different regions and/or sections. A map of the new DCS Regions is provided as an attachment to this report (Attachment A).

## **PROGRESS MADE IN INCREASING THE NUMBER OF FILLED FTE POSITIONS**

The Department maintains continuous efforts to reduce turnover in order to sustain sufficient staff resources that provide quality services to the children and families it serves. In state fiscal year 2019 (FY19), one of the Department's strategic objectives was to develop and retain a highly effective workforce by improving employee retention through improved supervision. The Department continues this objective through FY20.

In FY19, Governor Ducey signed HB2747 passed by the Arizona State Legislature that approved pay raises for DCS Specialists, Case Aides, Program Supervisors, Program Specialists and entry-level administrative positions. This allows the Department to compete for high quality staff with other agencies and private entities and retain those employees who have dedicated themselves to protecting children and supporting the Department's mission. A tiered pay structure was previously developed to retain new Specialists. This provided for an increase upon completion of training at 22 weeks and then another increase at one year of employment. During this reporting period, additional changes were implemented that provide DCS Specialists with an increase at 36 months.

DCS continues working to improve employee retention through use of Supervision Coaches. The development of roles, standard work, training, and filling these positions has been completed. DCS continues its work to implement a hiring selection process and interview guide for new field supervisors and standardized onboarding and on the job training experience for new field supervisors. The new training was piloted in the fall of 2019.

DCS HR works closely with local hiring managers to identify candidates for DCS Specialists based on selective preferences. Since different offices may have different or unique needs, HR's work with managers will help identify candidates who more closely meet the office's needs. HR works with local field offices to interview candidates at the site for which they are being considered to diminish confusion for both candidate and hiring manager. These efforts have shown improvements in the process. Moreover, DCS

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created geographically based requisitions for the DCS Specialist position for each Region rather than office based requisitions. This allows multiple offices, particularly those in close proximity, to view more potential candidates while still allowing applicants the option to interview close to their desired location. Additionally, DCS HR is utilizing Facebook and LinkedIn postings specifically for offices with higher vacancies. This helps target potential applicants in specific areas utilizing existing geo-mapping tools built into social media platforms.

Recruitment in rural areas is critical. DCS has focused some its advertising in the rural areas of White Mountain and St. John to identify more DCS Specialists to support the Northeast Region. Additionally, the Department has introduced and already selected candidates for the part-time MSW Program through Arizona State University (ASU) for DCS staff in rural areas through the university's online program. The Department has also attended NAU Job Fairs to promote employment with DCS' Northwest and Northeast Regions.

DCS HR continues to engage in other works with colleges and universities. The DCS Specialist positions are now posted on the "Handshake" website; a college based recruiting site. HR continues to strengthen its partnerships with local colleges and universities to attract potential candidates for employment. DCS maintains its partnership with ASU participating in the ASU Title IV-E Strategic Planning Meeting and Quarterly meeting.

DCS HR has also implemented changes to internal operations to better streamline the new applicant experience. A 'candidate to recruiter' experience was developed. This allows a candidate to directly access the recruiter and reducing the time it takes to complete the hiring process by several days.

To support DCS Specialists, Program Supervisors, Case Aides and other front line staff experiencing secondary trauma, DCS continues to offer its peer-to-peer support program, Workforce Resilience. This program seeks to enhance a healthy workforce and provide staff a safe and supportive environment when coping with the experiences inherent in child welfare and help address burnout staff may experience.

The Department has been sustaining its active recruitment process to fill all DCS Specialist positions. As of September 2019, the Department filled 1,329 (95 percent) of the 1,406 funded positions which is a four percent increase from June 2019 when 1,272 positions were filled (91 percent). As of September 30, 2019, DCS funds 229 supervisor positions, 228 (99 percent) of which were filled.

The Department continues its efforts to minimize the overall attrition of all DCS employees. Chart 1 shows the number of DCS Specialist hires for CY 2017 through CY 2019, along with hiring targets. These targets were established against historically observed attrition rates.

**Chart 1 – DCS Specialist Hires and Target Trends**

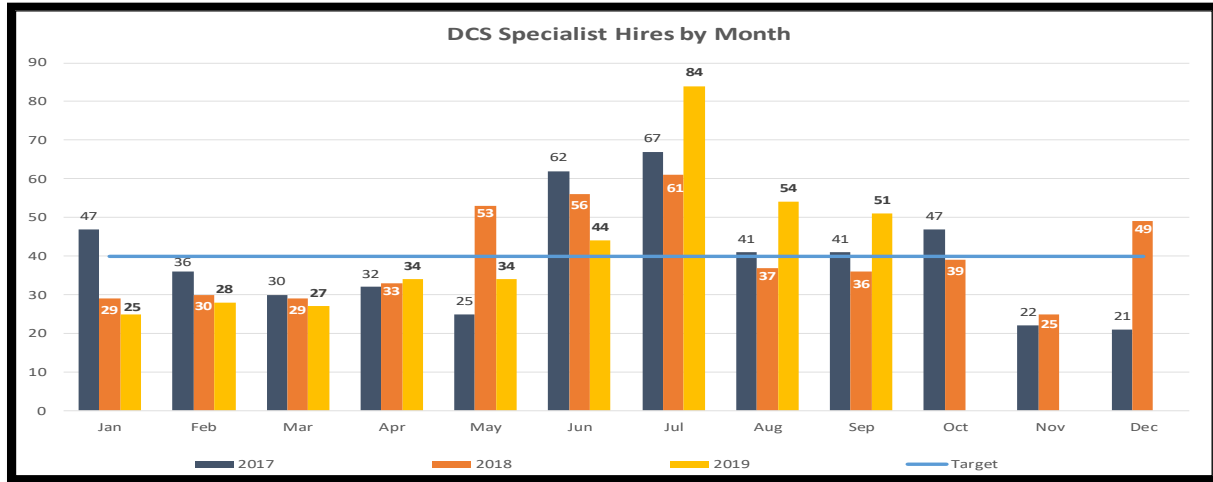


Chart 2 shows the Department’s reduction in turnover for all employees for CY 2017 through CY 2019.

**Chart 2 – All DCS Employee Attrition Trends**

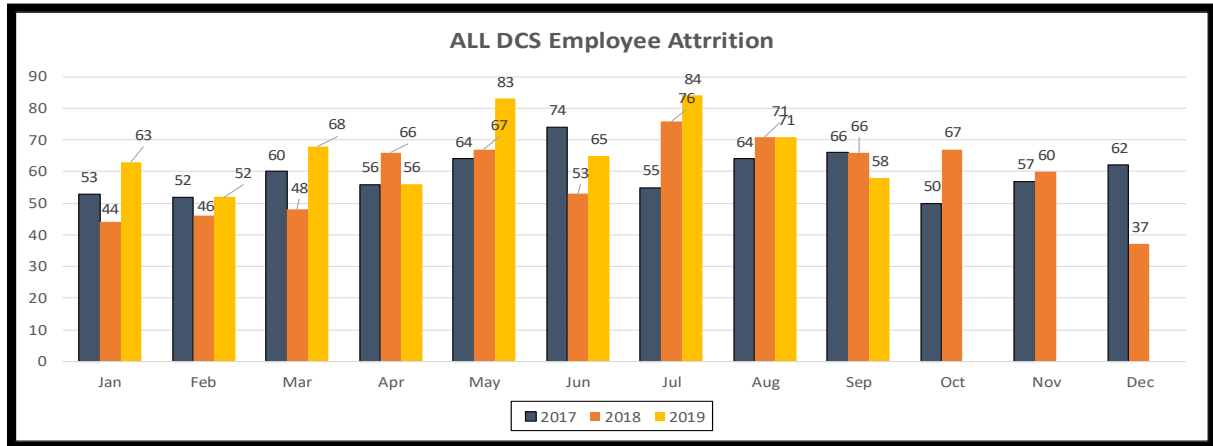
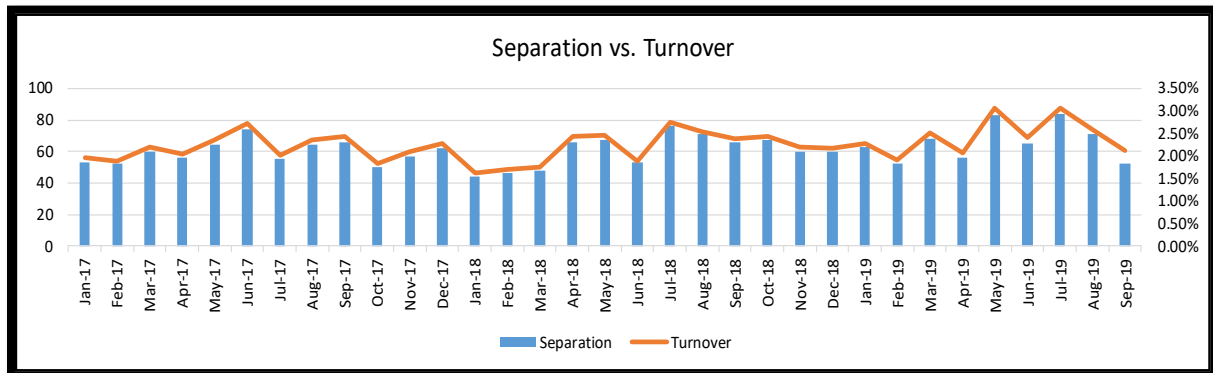


Chart 3 demonstrates the Department’s monthly separation data and turnover rate since March 2016.

**Chart 3 – All DCS Employee Monthly Turnover Rate Trends**



### **PROGRESS MAINTAINING INACTIVE CASES AND IMPROVING CASELOADS**

DCS has maintained the inactive cases well below the legislative benchmark of 1,000 since April 2017. Additionally, the Department reduced the number of open reports from 9,611 in December of 2016 to 7,569 as of September 2019. The Department has experienced a stabilization in the number of open reports where it has remained below 7,600 since February 2017.

Additionally, DCS HR continues its efforts to hire and place DCS Specialists at a rate equal to or greater than departures from the Department. Sustained staffing levels help contribute to the reduced number of inactive cases, total open reports, and foster care population. The overall caseloads for DCS investigators continue to decline across most offices (see Table 2).

In March 2017, DCS fell below the legislatively required benchmark of 1,000 inactive cases. From a peak of 16,014 in January of 2015, the Department now has only 177 inactive cases as of September 30, 2019, representing a 99 percent decrease. To avoid a return to higher numbers of inactive cases, the Department uses performance management and other elements of the management system to maintain caseload levels. DCS implemented several sustainment measures throughout the state to ensure inactive cases remain well below the benchmark. These include the implementation of performance management metrics to monitor and control the total number of open reports and the percentage of those reports that are overdue for investigation, and completion and closure and the implementation of leader standard work to ensure routine follow-up.

The Department achieved the initial benchmark of less than 13,000 open reports six months ahead of the established target date. From a peak of 33,245 open reports in April 2015, the Department reduced that to only 7,569 as of September 2019, representing a 77 percent reduction (see Table 1). This benchmark was decreased to 8,000 starting the first quarter of SFY 2019 where the Department has remained below each reporting period.

### **PROGRESS MADE REDUCING THE OUT-OF-HOME POPULATION**

The Department continues to maintain a safe reduction in the historical out-of-home foster care population. The Department experienced a slight increase in the number of children (18) in OOH care in the first quarter of SFY 2020 compared to the fourth quarter of SFY 2019. It should be noted that the number of youth in extended foster care (i.e. 18-20 year olds) contributed to the increase in the overall OOH population. It has been a strategic initiative of the Department to increase the successful transition of youth to adulthood which includes providing more youth over the age of eighteen with independent living services and supports. In multiple DCS reports, the Department reports the number of youth in OOH care broken out by those age zero to seventeen years and those eighteen through twenty years. The Department has still made progress since the baseline period of March 31, 2016 (18,917 children) in reducing the OOH population by 25 percent (4,712 children) to the current number of children in out-of-home care (14,223).

By slowing the entry rate and sustaining performance for children exiting care, the Department has been able to maintain a safe reduction of the foster care population. In addition, this is highlighted by no significant change in the re-entry rate for children who left care within the past 12 months. The entry rate per 1,000 of Arizona's general child population was 5.0 in June 2019 and again in September 2019. The reduction in the number of children entering out-of-home care can be attributed to several factors. These include, but are not limited to, the additional standardized process tools including supervisory administrative and case progress review checklists, as well as standardized safety discussions guides and training staff to better engage a family's network to identify in-home options in order to maintain children safely in the home. In 2017, DCS renovated and completed statewide training for the Safe AZ Model. Improved response times also contributes to the reduction of children entering care as this enables DCS

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Specialists to make decisions that will help support families, provide services in a timely manner and avoid entry into care.

Through the continued application of monthly clinical staffings on reunification cases using a standardized process, ongoing workers have been able to maintain the rate of children exiting care. By way of these standard process activities, paired with the continued use of cursory case reviews and Fostering Sustainable Connections (the Title IV-E Waiver demonstration project), the Department has safely maintained a reduction of the out-of-home care population during FY2019.

**Table 1 – Benchmark Performance**

	Q1FY18	Q2FY18	Q3FY18	Q4FY18	Q1FY19	Q2FY19	Q3FY19	Q4FY19	Q1FY20
Inactive Cases <sup>1</sup>									
<i>Benchmark (less than)</i>	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
<i>Actual</i>	212	265	176	225	183	302	355	179	177
Inactive Cases by disposition									
<i>Investigation Phase</i>	125	165	84	115	74	188	227	155	149
<i>In-Home Cases</i>	77	89	84	98	93	98	112	22	25
<i>Out-of-Home Cases</i>	10	11	8	12	16	16	16	2	3
Number of Open Reports									
<i>Benchmark (less than)</i>	13,000	13,000	13,000	13,000	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000
<i>Actual</i>	6,444	6,621	6,087	5,871	6,562	6,695	6,554	6,586	7,569
Number of Out-of-Home Children									
<i>Benchmark (less than)</i>	16,471	16,142	15,819	15,503	15,192	14,889	14,591	14,299	13,964
<i>Benchmark (% reduction)</i>	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	n/a
<i>Actual</i>	16,316	15,744	15,139	14,869	14,241	14,209	13,841	14,205	14,223

**Footnotes**

<sup>1</sup> Number of inactive cases is the actual figure as of the last Monday of the reporting period.

<sup>2</sup> As a result of Laws 2019, 1st Regular Session Ch. 263, Sec. 141 which continued this report, the benchmark established by the Legislature for number of out-of-home children was no longer based on a 2 percent reduction but a static number of 13,964.

Tables 2 and 3 show the caseload by section (field office) for investigations, out-of-home children, and in-home cases. Investigations are the number of reports assigned to each office. Out-of-home represents the number of children in ongoing cases assigned to each office. In-home cases represents the number of cases assigned to each office. Maricopa West, Maricopa East and South Regions have designated in-home units in specific sections. Northwest and Northeast Regions have mixed units where DCS Specialists may carry ongoing cases of children in out-of-home care as well as some in-home cases.

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**Table 2 – Headcount and Caseload Performance (FY19-Fourth Quarter)**

			Quarter 4 FY 2019							
			FTE		Workload					
Region <sup>1</sup>	Section #	Section name	Investigators	Case Managers	# Open Reports (investigations)	# of In home cases	# of Out-of-Home Children <sup>2</sup>	Investigation (reports per worker)	In Home (cases per worker)	Out of Home (children per worker)
Maricopa-East (10)	3	Osborn	19	19	318	---	514	17	---	27
	4	In Home	---	39	6	436	23	0	11	1
	5	Mesa	18	18	317	---	514	17	---	28
	6	Gilbert	18	18	231	---	475	13	---	26
	7	Tempe	20	20	336	---	597	17	---	30
	8	South Mountain	16	16	522	---	488	33	---	31
	9	North Central	18	18	287	---	378	16	---	21
	10	Permanency - South Mountain	0	41	---	---	1514	0	---	37
South (20)	1	Eastside Loop	13	14	156	---	226	12	---	16
	2	Tucson North - Oracle	12	12	128	---	256	11	---	22
	3	Tucson South - Valencia	12	12	139	---	321	11	---	26
	4	Tucson Midtown - Oracle	11	11	235	---	186	22	---	17
	5	Madera A - 4th Ave.	15	15	155	---	173	10	---	12
	6	Permanency - Alvernon	0	28	---	---	587	---	---	21
	7	Alvernon	15	15	166	---	239	11	---	16
	8	Cochise County	12	12	130	---	205	11	---	17
	9	Madera C / Nogales	15	15	190	0	302	13	0	20
	10	In Home	0	29	19	198	94	0	9	3
		11	Yuma	12	12	134	39	266	12	13
Northwest (30)	1	Prescott/Prescott Valley	12	12	168	5	194	14	0.4	16
	3	Cocconino County / Cottonwood	10	10	150	51	271	14	5	26
	4	Bullhead City/Lake Havasu	12	12	155	45	324	13	4	27
	5	Kingman	9	17	87	9	457	10	1	27
Northeast (40)	3	Globe / Payson / Safford	7	13	96	21	164	15	2	13
	4	St. Johns/Winslow/Show low	4	9	56	21	200	13	2	23
	5	Apache Junction/Kearney	15	15	156	34	516	10	17	33
	6	Casa Grande/Coolidge	17	17	159	36	458	9	18	26
Maricopa-West (50)	1	AHIT	19	---	0	---	3	0	---	0.2
	3	In Home	0	37	18	656	42	0.5	18	1
	4	Thunderbird	19	19	230	---	524	12	---	27
	5	Peoria	17	17	266	---	414	16	---	25
	6	Glendale/Durango	16	16	198	---	419	13	---	27
	7	Avondale/Advocacy	18	18	291	---	533	17	---	30
	8	Permanency	---	41	---	---	1299	---	---	32
	12	West 101	22	22	232	---	622	11	---	29
	13	Pinnacle Peak	19	19	176	---	396	9	---	21
<b>105, 106 - Other</b>	various	OCWI, GH/FH, Other	64	---	679	---	71	11	---	---
					<b>6,586</b>	<b>1,551</b>	<b>14,265</b>			

- As of Q1 FY2019, Specialists in a trainee status are accounted for in FTE figures in each section with an equal distribution of 66% caseload.

- In Home cases are based on a hand count of cases actively managed in each respective Region.

- In Home cases assignments differ Regionally. Maricopa East, Maricopa West and South Regions employ specific in-home units who manage in-home cases only, while Northeast and Northwest Regions and portions of South Region have mixed units that may carry in-home or out-of-home cases.

- FTE assignments to investigations or case management are based on assignment of 50% investigative and 50% ongoing in Maricopa East, Maricopa West and Northwest Regions. South and certain Northeast Regions sections employ a distribution of 34% Investigations and 66% ongoing.

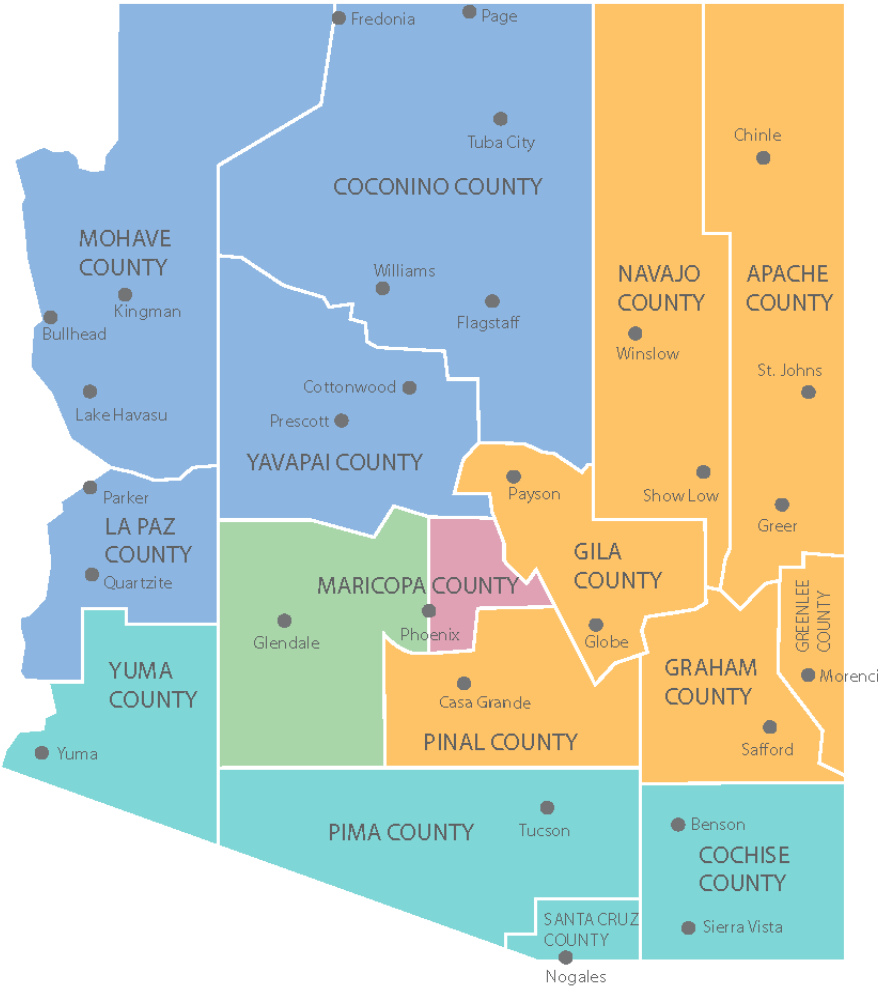


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**Table 3 – Headcount and Caseload Performance (FY20-First Quarter)**

Region <sup>1</sup> Section #      Section name			Quarter 1 FY 2020							
			FTE		Workload					
			Investigators	Case Managers	# Open Reports (investigations)	# of In home cases	# of Out-of-Home Children <sup>2</sup>	Investigation (reports per worker)	In Home (cases per worker)	Out of Home (children per worker)
Maricopa-East (10)	3	Osborn	20	20	326	---	460	16	---	23
	4	In Home	---	43	58	459	17	1	11	0
	5	Mesa	18	18	319	---	408	17	---	22
	6	Gilbert	18	18	351	---	472	19	---	26
	7	Tempe	20	20	470	---	620	24	---	31
	8	South Mountain	15	15	228	---	386	15	---	25
	9	North Central	19	19	329	---	422	17	---	22
	10	Permanency - South Mountain		42	4	---	1624	0	---	39
South (20)	1	Eastside Loop	14	15	177	---	221	13	---	15
	2	Tucson North - Oracle	13	13	207	---	257	16	---	20
	3	Tucson South - Valencia	11	11	175	---	285	15	---	25
	4	Tucson Midtown - Oracle	11	11	207	---	182	19	---	17
	5	Madera A - 4th Ave.	16	16	191	---	226	12	---	14
	6	Permanency - Alvernon	0	30	1	---	537	---	---	18
	7	Alvernon	13	13	176	---	268	14	---	21
	8	Cochise County	13	13	157	---	193	12	---	15
	9	Madera C / Nogales	14	14	205	---	292	15	---	21
	10	In Home	0	31	23	301	101	0	14	3
	11	Yuma	12	12	165	---	245	14	---	21
Northwest (30)	1	Prescott/Prescott Valley	10	10	180	13	184	17	1.2	18
	3	Coconino County / Cottonwood	12	12	149	51	282	12	4	23
	4	Bullhead City/Lake Havasu	10	10	146	50	237	15	5	24
	5	Kingman	9	18	152	8	549	17	0	31
Northeast (40)	3	Globe / Payson / Safford	5	11	115	35	229	21	3	22
	4	St. Johns/Winslow/Show low	3	7	78	2	125	23	0	19
	5	Apache Junction/Kearney	16	16	220	113	508	13	57	31
	6	Casa Grande/Coolidge	16	16	283	25	469	18	13	30
Maricopa-West (50)	1	AHIT	25	---	6	---	3	0	---	0.1
	3	In Home	0	37	42	681	38	1.1	18	1
	4	Thunderbird	19	19	340	---	537	18	---	28
	5	Peoria	17	17	312	---	398	18	---	23
	6	Glendale/Durango	20	20	208	---	476	11	---	24
	7	Avondale/Advocacy	18	18	242	---	499	14	---	28
	8	Permanency	---	40	2	---	1245	---	---	31
	12	West 101	20	20	304	---	615	15	---	30
	13	Pinnacle Peak	16	16	261	---	366	17	---	23
<b>105, 106 - Other</b>	various	OCWI, GH/FH, Other	67	---	760	---	247	11	---	---
					<b>7,569</b>	<b>1,738</b>	<b>14,223</b>			

- As of Q1 FY2019, Specialists in a trainee status are accounted for in FTE figures in each section with an equal distribution of 66% caseload.
- In Home cases are based on a hand count of cases actively managed in each respective Region.
- In Home cases assignments differ Regionally. Maricopa East, Maricopa West and South Regions employ specific in-home units who manage in-home cases only, while Northeast and Northwest Regions and portions of South Region have mixed units that may carry in-home or out-of-home cases.
- FTE assignments to investigations or case management are based on assignment of 50% investigative and 50% ongoing in Maricopa East, Maricopa West and Northwest Regions. South and certain Northeast Regions sections employ a distribution of 34% Investigations and 66% ongoing.



Regional Map

<b>NORTHWEST REGION</b>
Coconino, Mohave, La Paz Counties
<b>NORTHEAST REGION</b>
Apache, Graham, Greenlee, Gila and Pinal Counties
<b>MARICOPA - WEST</b>
Maricopa County - West of 7th Avenue
<b>MARICOPA - EAST</b>
Maricopa County - East of 7th Avenue
<b>SOUTH REGION</b>
Cochise, Pima, Santa Cruz, and Yuma Counties
<b>OFFICE OF CHILD WELFARE INVESTIGATIONS</b>
Maricopa and Pima Counties
<b>CHILD ABUSE HOTLINE-1-888-SOS-CHILD</b>
1-888-767-2445

Revised 06.18.19