

DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SAFETY



Quarterly Progress Report (Reducing Out-of-Home Children and Inactive Cases)

Report Date: June 30, 2020
Reporting Period: SFY2020, Quarter 3

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 for data through June 2020. Previous versions of this report required that data be reported on the last day of the quarter of the reporting period. Beginning September 2019, the Department submits this report covering data for the prior quarter.

In state fiscal year 2019 (SFY19), DCS realigned its five Regions. As a result, comparisons of regional data prior to July 2019 must be taken into account as some staff and cases previously assigned to one region in SFY19 were reassigned to a new region in SFY20. 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 SUSTAINING OPEN REPORTS, INACTIVE CASES, & IMPROVING CASELOADS

DCS has maintained the inactive cases well below the legislative benchmark of 1,000 since April 2017. 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 216 inactive cases as of March 31, 2020, representing a 99 percent decrease. To avoid a return to higher numbers of inactive cases and to help improve caseloads, the Department uses performance management and other elements of the management system. DCS employed several sustainment measures 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, 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 in December 2016 having reduced the number of open reports to 9,611. From a peak of 33,245 open reports in April 2015, the Department reduced that to only 6,973 as of March 2020 (see Table 1) representing a 79 percent decrease. The benchmark was decreased to 8,000 starting the first quarter of SFY 2019 where the Department has remained below each reporting period.

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).

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 (67) in OOH care in the third quarter of SFY20 compared to the second quarter of SFY20. The total OOH population includes all youth ages zero (0) through the age of twenty (20).

While the Department experienced a slight increase in the overall number of children in OOH care, it is important to note the number of youth in extended foster care (i.e. 18-20 year olds) continues to increase. This is intentional as the Department implemented a strategic initiative to increase the successful transition of youth to adulthood, which includes providing more youth over the age of eighteen with independent

DCS Quarterly Progress Report on Reducing OOH Child and Inactive Cases
June 2020

living services and supports. During the 2019 legislative session (Arizona fifty-fourth legislature), Senate Bill 1539 was passed which allowed the Department to expand the extended foster care program for qualified young adults and allows the adoption subsidy to continue through the age of 20.

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 since its historical high of 19,044 in 2016 to 14,209 in March 2020 representing a 25% decrease. The reduction in the number of children entering out-of-home care is the result of 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 discussion 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 contribute to the reduction of children entering care as this enables DCS Specialists to make decisions that will help support families, provide services in a timely manner and avoid entry into care. In addition, this safe reduction in the number of children in out-of-home care is highlighted by no significant change in the re-entry rate for children who left care within the past 12 months.¹

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 SFY2020.

Table 1 – Benchmark Performance

	Q4FY18	Q1FY19	Q2FY19	Q3FY19	Q4FY19	Q1FY20	Q2FY20	Q3FY20
Inactive Cases ¹								
<i>Benchmark (less than)</i>	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
<i>Actual</i>	225	183	302	355	179	177	308	216
Inactive Cases by disposition								
<i>Investigation Phase</i>	115	74	188	227	155	149	271	188
<i>Out-of-Home Cases</i>	12	16	16	16	2	3	5	3
<i>In-Home Cases</i>	98	93	98	112	22	25	32	25
Number of Open Reports								
<i>Benchmark (less than)</i>	13,000	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000
<i>Actual</i>	5,871	6,562	6,695	6,554	6,586	7,569	7,326	6,973
Number of Out-of-Home Children								
<i>Benchmark (less than)</i>	15,503	15,192	14,889	14,591	14,299	13,964	13,964	13,964
<i>Benchmark (% reduction)</i>	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	n/a	n/a	n/a
<i>Actual</i>	14,869	14,241	14,209	13,841	14,205	14,223	14,142	14,209

Footnotes

¹ Number of inactive cases is the actual figure as of the last Monday of the reporting period.

² 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. During CY2020, Northwest Region established two in-home units. Northeast Region has mixed units where DCS Specialists may carry ongoing cases of children in out-of-home care as well as some in-home cases.

¹ DCS Monthly Operational and Outcome Report (MOOR): <https://dcs.az.gov/news-reports/performance-measures>

DCS Quarterly Progress Report on Reducing OOH Child and Inactive Cases
June 2020

Table 2 – Headcount and Caseload Performance (SFY20-Second Quarter)

Region ¹ Section # Section name			Quarter 2 FY 2020							
			FTE		Workload					
			Investigators	Case Managers	As of 12/31/20 # Open Reports (investigations)	# of In home cases	as of 12/31/20 # of Out-of-Home Children ²	Investigation (reports per worker)	In Home (cases per worker)	Out of Home (children per worker)
Maricopa-East (10)	3	Osborn	19	19	311	---	504	17	---	27
	4	In Home	---	47	37	551	24	1	12	1
	5	Mesa	19	19	315	---	378	17	---	20
	6	Gilbert	18	18	377	---	495	21	---	28
	7	Tempe	19	19	414	---	636	22	---	33
	8	South Mountain	15	15	282	---	380	18	---	25
	9	North Central	19	19	355	---	531	18	---	27
	10	Permanency - South Mountain	---	41	3	---	1499	0	---	37
South (20)	1	Eastside Loop	15	18	133	---	229	9	---	13
	2	Tucson North - Oracle	14	14	175	---	272	13	---	20
	3	Tucson South - Valencia	13	13	143	---	328	11	---	25
	4	Tucson Midtown - Oracle	9	9	233	---	181	25	---	19
	5	Madera A - 4th Ave.	14	14	164	---	232	11	---	16
	6	Permanency - Averson	0	29	---	---	523	---	---	18
	7	Averson	12	12	138	---	265	11	---	21
	8	Cochise County	12	12	160	---	189	14	---	16
	9	Madera C / Nogales	15	15	195	---	260	13	---	18
	10	In Home	0	31	18	305	103	0	14	3
	11	Yuma	13	13	140	---	223	11	---	17
Northwest (30)	1	Prescott/Prescott Valley	13	13	176	13	194	13	1	15
	3	Coconino County / Cottonwood	12	12	120	41	248	10	3	21
	4	Bullhead City/Lake Havasu	9	9	137	33	224	15	4	25
	5	Kingman	10	18	77	15	567	8	1	31
Northeast (40)	3	Globe / Payson / Safford	7	13	99	45	226	15	3	17
	4	St. Johns/Winslow/Show low	5	10	80	17	110	16	2	11
	5	Apache Junction/Kearney	17	17	222	73	527	13	37	31
	6	Casa Grande/Coolidge	16	16	219	72	476	14	36	30
Maricopa-West (50)	1	AHIT	28	---	2	---	0	0	---	---
	3	In Home	0	45	38	643	37	1	14	1
	4	Thunderbird	18	18	385	---	554	21	---	30
	5	Peoria	17	17	297	---	422	18	---	25
	6	Glendale/Durango	19	19	252	---	478	13	---	25
	7	Avondale/Advocacy	20	20	209	---	519	10	---	26
	8	Permanency	---	42	2	---	1205	---	---	29
	12	West 101	21	21	371	---	687	18	---	33
13	Pinnacle Peak	14	14	201	---	351	14	---	25	
					0					
105, 106 - Other	various	OCWI, GH/FH, Other	62	---	846	---	65	14	---	---
					7,326	1,808	14,142			

- 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. In-Home units in Northeast Region were fully established in 2020, thus data across quarters varies by Section. Northeast Region 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.

Table 3 – Headcount and Caseload Performance (SFY20-Third Quarter)

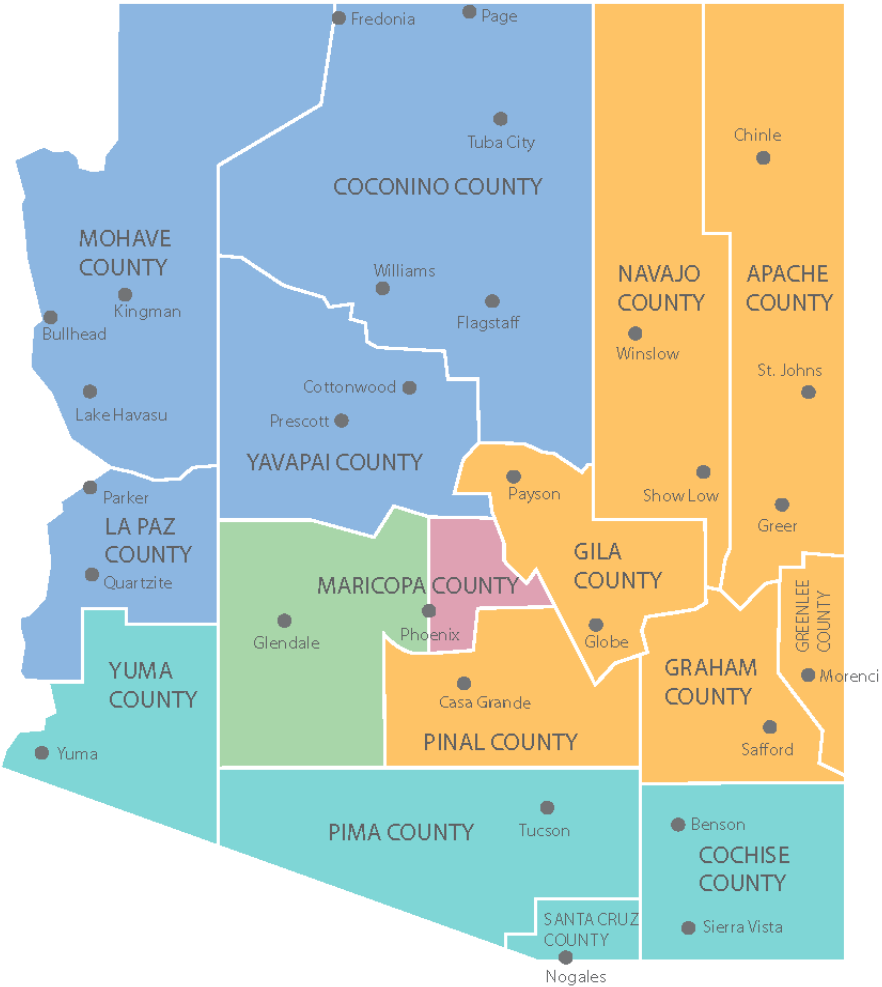
Region ¹ Section # Section name			Quarter 3 FY 2020							
			FTE		Workload					
			Investigators	Case Managers	As of 3/31/20 # Open Reports (investigations)	# of In home cases	as of 3/31/20 # of Out-of-Home Children ²	Investigation (reports per worker)	In Home (cases per worker)	Out of Home (children per worker)
Maricopa-East (10)	3	Osborn	18	18	261	---	473	14	---	26
	4	In Home	---	46	28	491	35	1	11	1
	5	Mesa	19	19	250	---	414	13	---	22
	6	Gilbert	18	18	349	---	458	20	---	26
	7	Tempe	19	19	312	---	616	16	---	32
	8	South Mountain	15	15	250	---	394	16	---	26
	9	North Central	19	19	350	---	548	18	---	28
	10	Permanency - South Mountain	---	44	6	---	1497	0	---	34
South (20)	1	Eastside Loop	15	18	145	---	259	10	---	15
	2	Tucson North - Oracle	14	14	190	---	300	14	---	22
	3	Tucson South - Valencia	14	14	170	---	339	12	---	24
	4	Tucson Midtown - Oracle	9	9	196	---	171	21	---	19
	5	Madera A - 4th Ave.	15	15	153	---	262	10	---	17
	6	Permanency - Alvernon	0	30	---	---	539	---	---	18
	7	Alvernon	12	12	160	---	281	13	---	23
	8	Cochise County	11	11	156	---	181	14	---	17
	9	Madera C / Nogales	16	16	213	---	264	13	---	17
	10	In Home	0	32	13	254	82	0	12	3
	11	Yuma	12	12	174	---	229	14	---	18
Northwest (30)	1	Prescott/Prescott Valley	13	13	158	58	197	12	4	15
	3	Coconino County / Cottonwood	13	13	133	---	258	10	---	20
	4	Bullhead City/Lake Havasu	9	9	109	38	188	12	4	21
	5	Kingman	11	21	99	---	566	9	---	27
Northeast (40)	3	Globe / Payson / Safford	7	14	101	27	258	14	2	18
	4	St. Johns/Winslow/Show low	4	8	81	7	123	20	1	16
	5	Apache Junction/Kearney	16	16	221	38	517	14	19	32
	6	Casa Grande/Coolidge	15	15	244	56	483	16	28	33
Maricopa-West (50)	1	AHIT	25	---	1	---	0	0	---	---
	3	In Home	0	45	34	608	26	1	14	1
	4	Thunderbird	18	18	390	---	566	21	---	31
	5	Peoria	16	16	235	---	381	14	---	23
	6	Glendale/Durango	19	19	243	---	476	12	---	24
	7	Avondale/Advocacy	20	20	268	---	573	13	---	28
	8	Permanency	---	44	3	---	1255	---	---	29
	12	West 101	20	20	300	---	628	15	---	32
13	Pinnacle Peak	13	13	174	---	326	13	---	24	
105, 106 - Other	various	OCWI, GH/FH, Other	68	---	803	---	46	12	---	---
					6,973	1,577	14,209			

- 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. In-Home units in Northeast Region were fully established in 2020, thus data across quarters varies by Section. Northeast Region 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

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

Revised 06.18.19