



**Douglas A. Ducey**  
Governor

**Gregory McKay**  
Director

September 30, 2016

The Honorable Justin Olson  
Chairman, House Appropriations Committee  
Arizona House of Representatives  
1700 West Washington  
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

Re: Department of Child Safety Quarterly Benchmark Progress Report

Dear Representative Olson:

Pursuant to Laws 2016, 2<sup>nd</sup> Regular Session, Chapter 8, Section 24, 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 2017.

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G. McKay". The signature is written over the word "Sincerely," and extends across the line.

Gregory McKay  
Director

Enclosure

cc: Richard Stavneak, Director, Joint Legislative Budget Committee  
Senator Don Shooter, Chairman, Senate Appropriations Committee  
Lorenzo Romero, Director, Governor's Office and Strategic Planning and Budgeting  
Patrick Moran, Joint Legislative Budget Committee  
Laura Johnson, Governor's Office and Strategic Planning and Budgeting



## **DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SAFETY**

### **Quarterly Benchmark Progress Report (Filling FTE Positions and Reducing the Backlog) September 2016**

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

The Department of Child Safety (DCS) has been engaged in several initiatives to help recruit and retain DCS staff, particularly the DCS Specialist and Supervisor positions. Key among these was a new position entitled DCS Specialist Trainee that was established for new hires for the first 22 weeks of employment. When the new employee successfully completes the 22 weeks of initial training, the DCS Specialist Trainee will be promoted to a DCS Specialist position. The DCS Specialist will then be eligible for a pay increase after one year of service. The Department believes by providing salary increases earlier in the first year of employment, employees who may leave employment due to a low salary may be retained. Additionally, a significant change in the structure of the salary schedule was implemented for Specialists. Instead of providing the initial salary increase at 12 months, the increase now occurs after 22 weeks with Specialists able to reach maximum salary after one year and 22 weeks compared to the prior schedule of reaching maximum salary at 24 months from the date of hire.

There has been focused work by the Department to fill 100 percent of DCS positions and reduce turnover in order to develop sufficient staff resources to provide quality services to the children and families it serves. Significant effort has taken place to fill positions statewide, including routine planning and information sharing meetings between Executive management, the Regional Program Administrators and Human Resources Managers. Recruitment and retention data is tracked and reviewed bi-monthly. The Department continues its active recruitment process to fill all positions. As of August 2016, the Department had filled 1,358 (97 percent) of the 1,406 appropriated positions.

The DCS Human Resources (HR) team set a goal of 60 new hires per month, which exceeds the average number of staff leaving the Department. In order to reach this goal, the team contacts all applicants immediately upon receipt of the initial application, sends recruitment packets via email to expedite the transmission of information, conducts follow-up emails or phone calls to applicants to attain missing or incomplete information, and schedules the new hire interview immediately upon receipt of the completed application. Additionally, the HR team added an additional staff member to assist in completing background reference checks to hasten the process. The HR team also began monitoring the number of new hires who leave DCS within their first year to better enable future analysis of this information. After maintaining an average of 60.5 hires for the first 8 months of CY 2016, DCS is now recruiting for selective Regions as needed. Active recruitment is focused on three Regions: Central, Northern and Southeast. Southwest and Pima Regions are at capacity and recruitment efforts are focused on projected losses.

The Department continues to post job listings/requisitions for specific Regions on the azstatejobs.gov website to encourage applications from individuals searching for employment within a specific community. Additionally, in February 2016, the Department implemented a career ladder for case aides with five or more years of experience with DCS to promote into Child Safety Specialist Trainee position, which brings staff already familiar with the child welfare system to areas of need.

To expedite the new hire fingerprint card process, a full time person at the Department of Public Safety continues to be available to process requests for fingerprint cards. In July 2016, DCS started processing Fingerprint Clearance Cards through FieldPrint which is a company that provides electronic fingerprinting collection and processing. This process is expected to reduce the processing time to approximately 3-5 business days.

**Table 1 – DCS Specialist Hires Made**

Month	Hires Made	Target
January	52	60
February	72	60
March	59	60
April	60	60
May	65	60
June	73	60
July	59	60
August	44	40
September	0	40
October	0	40
November	0	40
December	0	40
Total	484	60.5

**PROGRESS REDUCING INACTIVE CASES AND IMPROVING CASELOADS**

The Department has been engaged in activities and initiatives across the state to help reduce the caseloads for DCS investigators, ongoing Specialists and in-home Specialists. Chief among these has been the focused attention to reduce the backlog or inactive cases. The Department has steadily and consistently reduced this from a peak of 16,014 in January of 2015 to 4,790 as of September 27, 2016 representing a 70 percent decrease. By reducing the inactive cases, new reports are no longer adding to the backlog as investigators have been able to respond to and investigate new reports preventing them from becoming part of the backlog. As reported in June 2016, the Department has engaged in key reduction strategies: selected assistance work teams, regional action plans, leveraging partnerships, utilization of Model Field Offices as well as

maintaining weekly performance huddle calls as means of maintaining progress and establishing performance accountability. In addition, the Department established targets to reduce the total number of open reports to support the ongoing efforts to reduce the backlog and manage caseloads for investigators. From a peak of 33,245 open reports in April 2015, the Department has reduced that to only 13,477 open reports as of September 27, 2016 representing a 60 percent reduction.

Additionally, the DCS Human Resources department has made concerted efforts to hire, on average, at least 60 DCS Specialists per month to keep up with regular attrition and to address turnover rates that can impact caseloads when staff leave employment, promote within or change roles. During the first eight months of CY 2016, the Department hired an average of 60.5 Specialists per month. Caseloads have improved in the investigations process as a result of the backlog reduction and sustained Specialist hiring.

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

The Department realized positive gains in reducing the out-of-home foster care population over the past quarter and against the baseline period of March 31, 2016. Over this period of time, the Department reduced the out-of-home population by 734 children (3.9 percent) through a combination of efforts to standardize the removal decision process and engage Team Decision Making meetings more consistently and frequently. These processes have reduced the rate of children entering the foster care population. Complimentary, the Department has utilized a standard cursory case review process statewide in an effort to review all ongoing cases, identify and resolve barriers preventing permanency resulting in children exiting care at a greater rate than entering care for 8 of the last 10 months.

Over the course of the last 6 months, the number of dependent children being case managed by the Department remained constant at approximately 21,600 children as measured by the number of children on an open dependency petition while the children in the out-of-home population has reduced. This is the result of the Department utilizing In-Home services and safety plans more frequently.

As a result of these efforts and improvement filling open case manager positions caseloads around the state have reduced. These reductions have permitted improvements in monthly Child Contacts and clinical case staffings. However, cases loads in several regions still remain higher than desired and remain a priority for the Department to address. With investigative workload improving to manageable levels, the Department will continue to seek opportunities to adjust assignments to provider greater support to the ongoing cases managers.

DCS Quarterly Benchmark Progress Report  
September 2016

**Table 2 – Benchmark Performance**

	Q1FY17	Q2FY17	Q3FY17	Q4FY17	Q1FY18	Q2FY18	Q3FY18	Q4FY18
Backlog Cases								
<i>Benchmark (less than)</i>	10,000	7,000	4,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
<i>Actual</i> <sup>3</sup>	4,790							
Backlog Case by disposition								
<i>Investigation Phase</i>	4,554							
<i>In-Home Cases</i>	222							
<i>Out-of-Home Cases</i>	14							
Number of Open Reports								
<i>Benchmark (less than)</i>	---	---	---	13,000	13,000	13,000	13,000	13,000
<i>Actual</i>	13,477							
Number of Out-of-Home Children								
<i>Benchmark (less than)</i>	---	---						17,500
<i>Benchmark (% reduction)</i>	---	---	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
<i>Actual</i>	18,183							

<sup>3</sup> Number of inactive cases is the actual figure as of the Monday before the legislatively required reporting period based on the automated report run.

Table 3 – Headcount and Caseload Performance

Region	Section name	March 31, 2016 Baseline <sup>1</sup>			Quarter 1 FY 2017 <sup>1</sup>							
		Workload			FTE <sup>1,4,8</sup>		Workload					
		No. of Open Reports (Investigations)	No. of In-Home cases <sup>6</sup>	No. of Out-of-Home Children <sup>5</sup>	Investigators	Case Managers	No. of Open Reports (Investigations) <sup>2</sup>	No. of In-Home cases <sup>6</sup>	No. of Out-of-Home Children <sup>5</sup>	Open Reports per Worker	In Home Cases per Worker <sup>7</sup>	Out of Home Children per Worker
10 - Central	Apache Junction/Kearney	576	0	601	13	13	439	0	607	33.01	0	45.64
	Casa Grande/Coolidge	834	0	688	10	10	536	0	632	53.07	0	62.57
	Osborn	1005	0	542	11	11	780	0	569	69.03	0	50.35
	In Home	17	495	111	---	26	34	587	37	1.31	23	1.42
	Mesa	1423	0	615	11	11	670	0	595	59.29	0	52.65
	Gilbert	1236	0	824	15	15	447	0	786	29.41	0	51.71
	Tempe	1786	0	913	16	16	1328	0	719	81.98	0	44.38
	South Mountain	1493	0	663	17	17	1200	0	764	69.77	0	44.42
	North Central	1522	0	775	10	10	1136	0	571	118.33	0	59.48
19th Avenue	2	0	1520	0	32	2	0	1544	0.06	0	48.25	
20-Pima	East Broadway	980	49	342	17	22	425	50	335	24.68	2	15.38
	Wetmore	227	27	398	10	20	170	39	391	16.45	2	19.49
	Country Club	132	18	370	12	24	87	29	403	6.99	1	16.68
	Wetmore	126	19	313	11	21	126	25	291	11.80	1	14.04
	22nd and Alvernon	599	39	164	9	17	149	15	180	16.86	1	10.49
	AHIT/Adoptions	7	0	555	4	0	42	0	565	10.50	0	0.00
	Broadway	326	53	379	9	17	252	26	335	29.65	2	20.30
	Valencia	174	15	312	9	17	157	20	299	18.47	1	18.12
	Alvernon	82	0	340	10	19	42	0	307	4.26	0	16.04
30- Northern	Prescott/Prescott Valley	266	---	398	10	10	238	---	367	23.56	---	36.34
	St. Johns/Winslow/Show low	127	---	188	5	5	77	---	189	14.26	---	35.00
	Flagstaff/Page/Cottonwood/Fredonia	200	---	220	10	10	213	---	214	22.19	---	22.29
	Bullhead City/Lake Havasu	176	---	399	9	9	198	---	244	22.76	---	28.05
	Kingman	198	---	132	6	6	119	---	312	20.17	---	52.88
40- Southeast	Benson, Douglas, Nogales, SV	254	30	245	7	13	59	11	232	8.94	1	18.12
	SV, Safford	645	34	169	5	11	207	35	186	38.05	3	17.61
	Globe, Payson	383	14	119	2	4	67	19	120	29.86	4	27.55
50- Southwest	CHILDHELP Advocacy	483	0	4	5	0	172	---	1	34.40	0	0.00
	In Home	44	---	101	0	39	40	682	150	1.03	21	25.00
	Thunderbird	937	0	774	17	17	428	---	687	25.48	0	40.89
	Peoria	1999	0	839	16	16	1151	---	691	70.61	0	42.39
	Glendale/Durango	1558	0	584	20	20	424	---	740	20.89	0	36.45
	Avondale/Advocacy	614	0	804	17	17	474	---	707	28.55	0	42.59
	Adoptions	0	0	1667	0	48	0	---	1721	0.00	0	35.85
	Yuma, Parker, Summerton	347	0	418	17	17	192	---	411	11.57	0	24.76
	West 101	953	0	670	13	13	586	---	590	45.08	0	45.38
Pinnacle Peak	597	0	713	10	10	433	---	630	43.74	0	63.64	
9, 105 - Other	Various	370	---	48	0	0	377	---	61	---	---	---
<b>Totals</b>		<b>22698</b>	<b>793</b>	<b>18917</b>			<b>13477</b>	<b>1538</b>	<b>18183</b>			

Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> In regards to FTE reporting for March 31, 2016, the process of reporting FTE, specifically the section assignment of trainees, was not established. As a result, the FTE counts for that period are not available since they do not match the information on the total number of filled FTE positions as is required by the monthly hiring report.

<sup>2</sup> Number of open reports is the actual figure as of the Monday before the legislatively required reporting period based on the automated report run.

<sup>4</sup> Trainees are accounted for in FTE figures in each section with an equal distribution of 20 percent caseload.

<sup>5</sup> Out-of-home population figures are directly from the 20th of the Month Tigger which is a lagging 60 day metric.

<sup>6</sup> In-home cases are based on a handcount of cases actively managed in each respective region. March 31, 2016 in-home case count values were not available for Northern and Southwest Regions as those Regions counted the number of children and not the number of cases.

<sup>7</sup> In-home cases assignments differ regionally. Central and Southwest Regions employ specific in home units who manage in home cases only while Northern, Pima and Southeast Regions have mixed units that may carry in home or out of home cases.

<sup>8</sup> FTE assignments to investigations or case management are based on assignment of 50 percent investigations and 50 percent ongoing in Central, Northern and Southwest Regions. Pima and Southeast Regions employ a distribution of 34 percent investigations and 66 percent ongoing.

<sup>9</sup> Southwest Region, Section 3, manages both in-home units and permanency planning units. The workload distribution is based on one unit of Permanency Planning Specialists and the remaining Specialists are assigned to in-home units.