



ARIZONA
DEPARTMENT
of CHILD SAFETY

Mike Faust, Director
Douglas A. Ducey, Governor

March 31, 2020

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 second quarter of SFY 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", with a horizontal line extending to the right.

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 (Reducing Out-of-Home Children and Inactive Cases)

Report Date: March 31, 2020
Reporting Period: SFY2020, Quarter 2

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. 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 take this 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 271 inactive cases as of December 31, 2019, representing a 98 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.

Additionally, the Department reduced the number of open reports from 9,611 in December of 2016 to 7,326 as of December 2019. 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 (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.

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 decrease in the number of children (81) in OOH care in the second quarter of SFY20 compared to the first quarter of SFY20. The total OOH population includes all youth ages zero (0) through the age of twenty (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. In addition, this is highlighted by no significant change in the re-entry rate for children who left care within

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the past 12 months. The entry rate per 1,000 of Arizona’s general child population was 5.0 in September 2019 and 4.8 in December 2019.¹ 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 Specialists to make decisions that will help support families, provide services in a timely manner and avoid entry into care.

While the Department experienced a slight decrease in the overall number of children in OOH care, 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 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.

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 SFY2019.

Table 1 – Benchmark Performance

	Q3FY18	Q4FY18	Q1FY19	Q2FY19	Q3FY19	Q4FY19	Q1FY20	Q2FY20	
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>	176	225	183	302	355	179	177	308	
Inactive Cases by disposition									
<i>Investigation Phase</i>	84	115	74	188	227	155	149	271	
<i>In-Home Cases</i>	84	98	93	98	112	22	25	5	
<i>Out-of-Home Cases</i>	8	12	16	16	16	2	3	32	
Number of Open Reports									
<i>Benchmark (less than)</i>	13,000	13,000	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000	
<i>Actual</i>	6,087	5,871	6,562	6,695	6,554	6,586	7,569	7,326	
Number of Out-of-Home Children									
<i>Benchmark (less than)</i>	15,819	15,503	15,192	14,889	14,591	14,299	13,964	13,964	
<i>Benchmark (% reduction)</i>	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	n/a	n/a	
<i>Actual</i>	15,139	14,869	14,241	14,209	13,841	14,205	14,223	14,142	

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. 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.

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

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

Region ¹ Section # Section name			Quarter 1 FY 2020							
			FTE		Workload					
			Investigators	Case Managers	# Open Reports (investigations)	# of In home cases	# 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	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
		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/Keamey	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	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	
105, 106 - Other	various	OCWI, GH/FH, Other	67	---	760	---	247	11	---	---
					7,569	1,738	14,223			

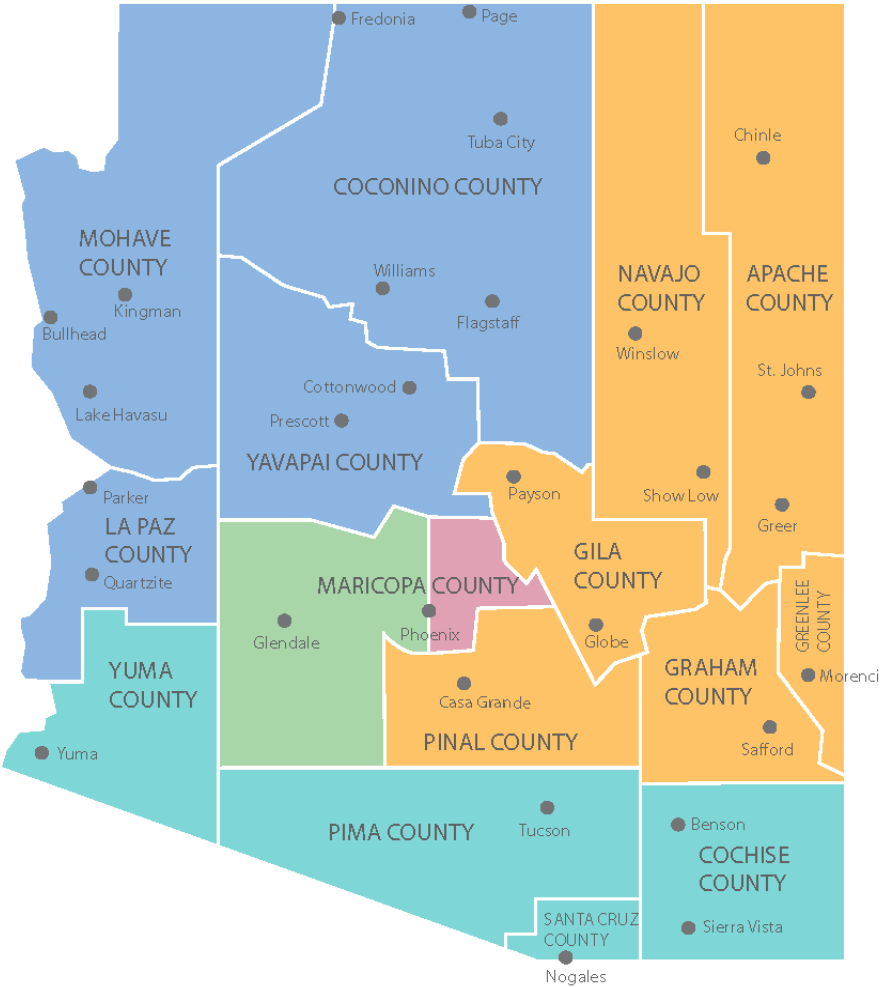
- As of Q1 FY2019, Specialists in a trainee status are accounted for in FTE figures in each section with an equal distribution of 66% caseload.
- In Home cases are based on a hand count of cases actively managed in each respective Region.
- In Home cases assignments differ Regionally. Maricopa East, 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-Second Quarter)

Region ¹ Section # Section name			Quarter 2 FY 2020							
			FTE		Workload					
			Investigators	Case Managers	# Open Reports (investigations)	# of In home cases	# 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 - Alvernon	0	29		---	523	---	---	18
	7	Alvernon	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	Cocconino 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, 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

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

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