



December 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, 2nd 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 second 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", written over a large, empty oval space.

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) December 2016

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 which includes a nominal pay increase. The DCS Specialist will then be eligible for an additional pay increase after one year of service. This significant change in the structure of the salary schedule was implemented for Specialists as the Department believes that by providing these increases earlier in the first year of employment, employees who may leave employment due to a low salary may be retained. Instead of providing the initial salary increase at 12 months, the increase now occurs after 22 weeks with Specialists in good standing being 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. Action plans are developed when areas of concern are identified through this tracking process. The Department continues its active recruitment process to fill all Child Safety Specialist positions. As of August 2016, the Department had filled 1,358 (97 percent) of the 1,406 appropriated Specialist positions.

After maintaining an average of 60.5 hires for the first 8 months of CY 2016. The DCS Human Resources (HR) team has transition their hiring practice from targeting 60 new hires per month to partnering with the Regional Program Administrators to develop and implement a staffing plan to meet the region's current hiring demands. Additionally, the HR team has an assigned staff member to assist in completing background reference checks to hasten the process.

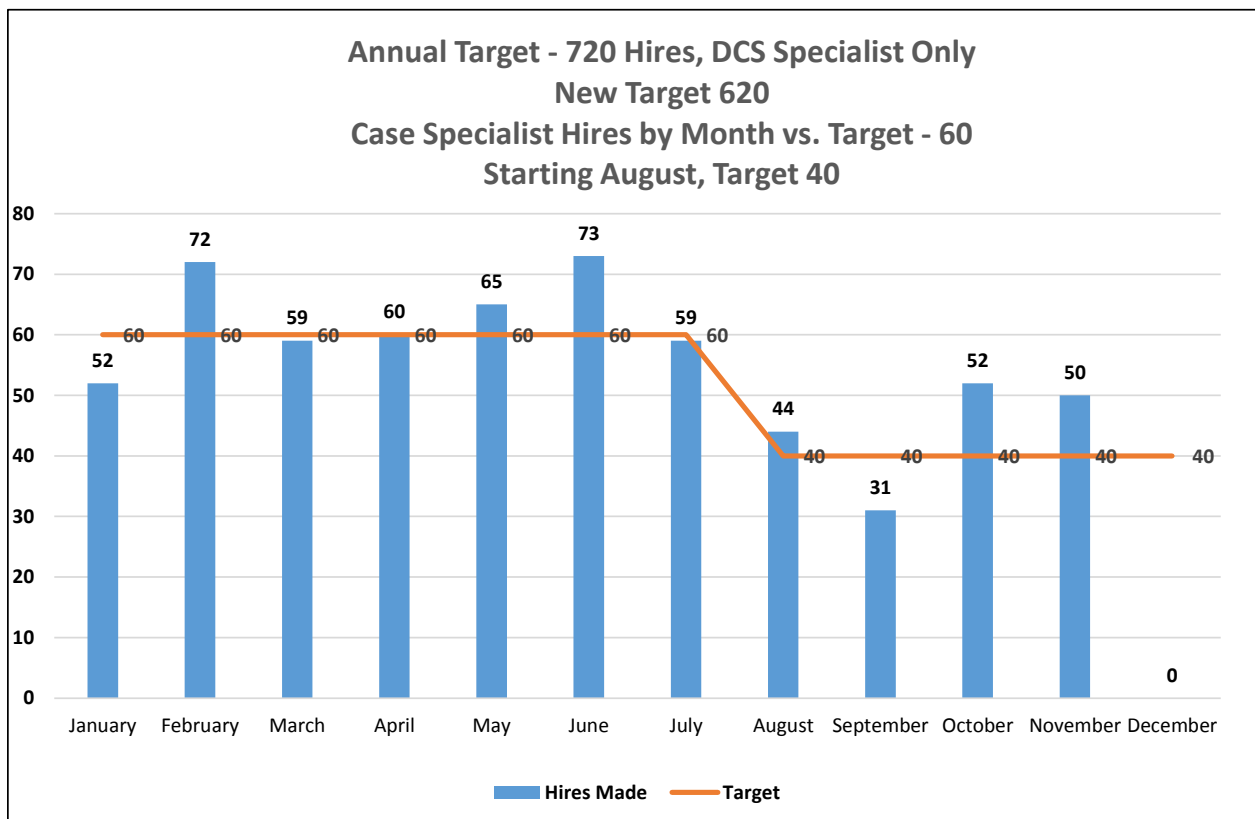
During the current quarter, only 89 Specialist left employment during the current reporting period compared to 144 for the first quarter of FY 2017 which is a 38 percent decrease. The HR team continues to monitor the number of new hires who leave DCS within their first year via employee exit surveys to better understand the reasons why employees are choosing to exit the agency so employee engagement strategies can be developed to address employee attrition.

Starting November 1, 2016, DCS initiated a Pilot program, implementing the Predictive Index (PI) assessment to all candidates from the Central Region. The PI assessment is a science-based methodology which helps to understand what drives workplace behaviors to better ensure alignment between candidates and their actual job duties. It helps to predict workplace behaviors and actual on-the-job performance. The Department plans to expand PI assessment to all Regions in the future after successful implementation in Central Region.

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. 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 fulltime 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.

Chart 1 – DCS Specialist Hires and Target Trends



PROGRESS REDUCING INACTIVE CASES AND IMPROVING CASELOADS

During the second quarter of FY 2017, the Department has maintained activities and initiatives across the state to continue reducing the backlog and total number of open reports. Additionally, the DCS human resources department has made concerted efforts to hire and place specialists at a rate equal to any departures from the Department. As a result of the sustained staffing levels, reduced number of backlog inactive cases and total open reports, and reduced foster care population, the overall caseloads for DCS investigators, ongoing Specialists and in-home Specialists has reduced this quarter.

The Department has steadily and consistently reduced the inactive case backlog from a peak of 16,014 in January of 2015 to 2,854 as of December 29, 2016 representing an 82 percent decrease. In many portions of the state, efforts have transitioned from reduction initiatives to sustainment activities as a means of maintaining the positive gains achieved and preventing the recurrence of an investigative backlog. In those particular offices, sustainment measures 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, and the implementation of leader standard work to ensure routine follow-up.

In offices still carrying a higher than desired number of open reports and inactive cases, the Department is continuing the use of selected assistance work teams, Regional action plans, leveraging provider partnerships as well as maintaining weekly performance huddle calls as a means of maintaining progress and establishing performance accountability. As a result of these efforts, the Department has achieved the 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 has reduced that to only 9,611 open reports as of December 29, 2016 representing a 71 percent reduction.

PROGRESS MADE TO SAFELY REDUCE THE OUT-OF-HOME POPULATION

While much of the emphasis has been focused on continued reduction of the backlog and total number of open reports, additional efforts have been made to safely reduce the out-of-home foster care population. The Department realized progress in fiscal quarter 2, safely reducing the out-of-home foster care population by 1.35 percent (247 children) ending with 17,936 children in care. The progress made since the baseline period of March 31, 2016 is a 5.2 percent reduction (981 children). These gains represent the first sustainable population reduction in nearly a decade. The safe reduction of the foster care population can be attributed to several key factors: slowing of the entry rate and sustainable performance in children exiting care.

Over the past two fiscal quarters, investigative case manager workload has dropped appreciably as the backlog has been eliminated. Investigative case managers are able to respond faster and provide services more quickly to mitigate risk factors. This coupled with the additional standardized process tools including supervisory administrative and case progress review

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checklists, as well as standardized safety discussions guides have attributed to the reduced number of children entering out-of-home care population.

Simultaneously, while the number of children entering the system has reduced, the number of children exiting care has sustained year-over-year performance. 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. These standard process activities when paired with the continued use of cursory case reviews and Fostering Sustainable Connections (the Title IV-E Waiver demonstration project), the Department seeks to continue realizing safe and sustainable out-of-home care population reductions.

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>	4,790	2,854						
Backlog Case by disposition	<i>Investigation Phase</i>	4,554	2,671						
	<i>In-Home Cases</i>	222	160						
	<i>Out-of-Home Cases</i>	14	23						
Number of Open Reports	<i>Benchmark (less than)</i>	---	---	---	13,000	13,000	13,000	13,000	13,000
	<i>Actual</i>	13,477	9,611						
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	17,936						

Footnotes

- Number of open reports is the actual figure as of the Monday before the legislatively required reporting period based on the automated report run.
- Number of inactive cases is the actual figure as of the Monday before the legislatively required reporting period based on the automated report run.
- Out-of-home population figures are directly from the 20th of the Month Tigger which is a lagging 60 day metric.

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Table 3 – Headcount and Caseload Performance

Region	Section #	Section name	March 31, 2016 Baseline			Quarter 1 FY 2017							Quarter 2 FY 2017									
			Workload			FTE		Workload			FTE		Workload			FTE		Workload				
			# of open reports (investigations)	# of In home cases	# of Out-of-Home Children	Investigators	Case managers	# of open reports (investigations)	# of In home cases	# of Out-of-Home Children	Investigation (reports per worker)	In Home (cases per worker)	Out of Home (children per worker)	Investigators	Case managers	# of open reports (investigations)	# of In home cases	# of Out-of-Home Children	Investigation (reports per worker)	In Home (cases per worker)	Out of Home (children per worker)	
10 - Central	0, 1	Apache Junction/Kearney	576	0	601	13	13	439	0	607	33	0	46	12	12	393		621	32		51	
	2	Casa Grande/Coolidge	834	0	688	10	10	536	0	632	53	0	63	14	14	498		624	35		44	
	3	Osborn	1005	0	542	11	11	780	0	569	69	0	50	17	17	650		607	39		36	
	4	In Home	17	495	111		26	34	587	37	1	23	1		27	23	590	25	1	22	1	
	5	Mesa	1423	0	615	11	11	670	0	595	59	0	53	16	16	457		593	29		38	
	6	Gilbert	1236	0	824	15	15	447	0	786	29	0	52	16	16	327		715	20		44	
	7	Tempe	1786	0	913	16	16	1328	0	719	82	0	44	18	18	773		677	43		37	
	8	South Mountain	1493	0	663	17	17	1200	0	764	70	0	44	20	20	1081		841	55		43	
	9	North Central	1522	0	775	10	10	1136	0	571	118	0	59	11	11	524		525	46		46	
	10	19th Avenue	2	0	1520	0	32	2	0	1544	0	0	48		32	0		1408	0		44	
20-Pima	1	East Broadway	980	49	342	17	22	425	50	335	25	2	15	21	29	304	48	382	15	2	13	
	2	Wetmore	227	27	398	10	20	170	39	391	16	2	19	11	21	164	38	412	15	2	20	
	3	Country Club	132	18	370	12	24	87	29	403	7	1	17	12	23	90	27	472	8	1	21	
	4	Wetmore	126	19	313	11	21	126	25	291	12	1	14	11	21	168	24	249	16	1	12	
	5	Madera A	599	39	164	9	17	149	15	180	17	1	10	10	20	147	14	251	14	1	13	
	6,0	AHIT/Adoptions	7	0	555	4	0	42	0	565	11	0	0	1	1	2	0	471	3	0	357	
	7	22nd/Alvernon	326	53	379	9	17	252	26	335	30	2	20	10	20	136	27	350	13	1	18	
	9	Madera B	174	15	312	9	17	157	20	299	18	1	18	11	22	203	23	282	18	1	13	
	10	Alvernon	82	0	340	10	19	42	0	307	4	0	16	12	23	40	0	294	3	0	13	
	30- Northern	1	Prescott/Prescott Valley	266	---	398	10	10	238	---	367	24	---	36	12	12	216	24	372	18	2	30
2		St. Johns/Winslow/Show low	127	---	188	5	5	77	---	189	14	---	35	6	6	35	21	191	6	3	31	
3		Flagstaff/Page/Cottonwood/Fredonia	200	---	220	10	10	213	---	214	22	---	22	10	10	217	29	196	21	3	19	
4		Bullhead City/Lake Havasu	176	---	399	9	9	198	---	244	23	---	28	8	8	113	62	214	15	8	29	
5,00		Kingman	198	---	132	6	6	119	---	312	20	---	53	11	11	93	13	372	8	1	34	
40- Southeast	1	Benson, Douglas, Nogales, SV	254	30	245	7	13	59	11	232	9	1	18	7	13	37	12	211	5		16	
	2	SV, Safford	645	34	169	5	11	207	35	186	38	3	18	3	11	146	33	182	54		17	
	3	Globe, Payson	383	14	119	2	4	67	19	120	30	4	28	4	4	31	15	107	8		25	
50- Southwest	0, 1	CHILDELP Advocacy	483	0	4	5	0	172	---	1	34	0	0	35	0	111		2	3		0	
	3	In Home	44	---	101	0	39	40	682	150	1	21	25		42	37	619	150	1	15	4	
	4	Thunderbird	937	0	774	17	17	428	---	687	25	0	41	16	16	317		651	20		42	
	5	Peoria	1999	0	839	16	16	1151	---	691	71	0	42	18	18	472		678	27		38	
	6	Glendale/Durango	1558	0	584	20	20	424	---	740	21	0	36	22	22	315		656	14		29	
	7	Avondale/Advocacy	614	0	804	17	17	474	---	707	29	0	43	19	19	364		782	19		40	
	8	Adoptions	0	0	1667	0	48	0	---	1721	0	0	36		42	---		1684	0		40	
	9	Yuma, Parker, Summerton	347	0	418	17	17	192	---	411	12	0	25	16	16	182		449	11		28	
	12	West 101	953	0	670	13	13	586	---	590	45	0	45	17	17	418		654	24		38	
	13	Pinnacle Peak	597	0	713	10	10	433	---	630	44	0	64	15	15	285		532	19		35	
	9, 105 - Other	various	Various	370		48			377		61					242		54				
	Totals			22698	793	18917			13477	1538	18183					9611	1619	17936				

Footnotes

- FTE reporting for March 31, 2016: The process of reporting FTE, in particular the specific section assignment of trainees, was not yet established in March 2016. 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
- Number of open reports is the actual figure as of the Monday before the legislatively required reporting period based on the automated report run.
- Number of inactive cases is the actual figure as of the Monday before the legislatively required reporting period based on the automated report run.
- Trainees are accounted for in FTE figures in each section with an equal distribution of 20% caseload.
- Out-of-home population figures are directly from the 20th of the Month Tigger which is a lagging 60 day metric.
- In Home cases are based on a handcount of cases actively managed in each respective region. March values for Northern Region are not available given that the region counted the number of children and not the number of cases.
- In Home case figures were not handcounted in Southwest Region in March 2016. The handcount only included total child count.
- 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.
- FTE assignments to investigations or case management are based on assignment of 50% investigative and 50% ongoing in Central, Northern and Southwest Regions. Pima and Southeast Regions employ a distribution of 34% Investigations and 66% ongoing.
- Section 6 Pima case load indicates high as all Pima adoption cases have been centralized to this unit and is transitioning from Vendor managed
- Southwest Region section 3 manages both in home cases and permanency planning units. The workload distribution is based on 1 unit of Permanency Planning workers and the remaining workers assigned to In Home