



**DEPARTMENT OF
CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES**



Supplemental Report of the 2021-22 Budget Act

Department of Child Support Services

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I. INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to the Supplemental Reporting Language requirements of the 2021-22 Budget Act (Item 5175-101-0001), the Department of Child Support Services (DCSS) is to provide written quarterly updates, commencing on December 1, 2021, regarding the following:

- Comparing case-to-staff ratios for all local child support agencies (LCSAs) against the goal ratio,
- Identifying under- and over- funded LCSAs,
- Indicating the statewide average to show the improvement, or lack thereof, in ultimately meeting the desired case-to-staff ratio for all LCSAs, and
- Providing an estimate in the 2022 Governor's Budget of how much funding is expected, both in the aggregate and for each LCSA, to bring all LCSAs to the goal case-to-staff ratio.

II. BACKGROUND

The Child Support Program serves one in ten Californians by providing an effective system for establishing paternity for children, establishing court orders for financial and medical support, and enforcing those orders. Child support services are available to the public through a network of 51 county and regional child support agencies that serve approximately 3.6 million children, parents, and caregivers.

The Child Support Program has a substantial positive impact on California's children and families, both financially and emotionally. The program collected over \$2.7 billion in state fiscal year (SFY) 2019-20, of which \$2.2 billion was distributed directly to families and \$500 million was returned to federal, state, and county governments for repayment of public assistance.

In May of 2018, the DCSS and the California Child Support Directors Association (CSDA) submitted a budget proposal to the Legislature utilizing a standardized case-to-staff ratio for LCSA funding. The Legislature approved \$9 million (\$3 million State General Fund (SGF)) for immediate relief to LCSAs that were under the target ratio and enacted Family Code Section 17705 to require DCSS, in collaboration with CSDA, to develop a funding methodology.

The methodology developed, funded each LCSA based on a case-to-staff ratio predetermined by a Level of Effort (LOE) Study conducted by 15 sample LCSAs ranging from very large in size (e.g., Los Angeles) to very small (e.g., Marin).

- The LOE Study surveyed program experts at each LCSA to determine the amount of time/effort on average it takes LCSA staff to complete a wide array of mandatory casework related activities:

- Open cases, establish and enforce orders, review and adjust existing cases/orders, casework financials, attorney services, and clerical and administrative support.
- The ratio is not a reflection of how the LCSAs operate today, but rather the level of resources needed to address the entire volume of mandatory tasks.
- Full-time equivalents (FTEs) for each LCSA are funded at the average cost of staffing for their respective county to address the different salary and benefit rates across each county.
- A compliment of 20.9% of personnel costs is applied to cover non-employee operating expenses and equipment such as contracts, facility leases, maintenance, utilities, office supplies and equipment, etc.

The 2019 Budget Act included \$56 million (\$19.1 million SGF) with a total anticipated funding need of \$168 million (\$57.2 million SGF) by SFY 2021-22. The Legislature approved the funding methodology and codified its implementation within Family Code Section 17306.1.

As a result of Family Code Section 17306.1 requirements, DCSS revised the funding methodology to calculate casework operations and call center operations. Each year the funding calculator is updated to capture the most recent caseload, staffing data, and call volumes. The statewide calculated case-to-staff ratio for SFY 2022-23 is **185.3**.

III. STATEWIDE DISPLAY OF CASE TO STAFF RATIOS

This report measures the progress made to date, by displaying the current case-to-staff ratio for each LCSA and comparing the data to the target ratios established by the state.

Source Data and Calculations:

- Actual Caseload – Child Support 1257 Report
- Actual FTEs – DCSS’ Budget and Expenditure Claiming Application (BECA)
 - Entered by LCSAs as actual FTEs when reporting their monthly expenditures.
 - FTE counts displayed in the table include Attorneys, Administrators, Casework Staff, Investigators, Financial Workers, Training and Performance Management, Clerical and Administrative Staff, Management and Supervisors, and Temporary Help.
 - FTE counts do not include Call Center staff, electronic data processing staff, or contracted staff as they are not included in the Actual FTE counts in the LCSA Funding Methodology.
- Actual Case-to-Staff Ratio – Actual Caseload data is divided by Actual FTE counts for each point in time.
- Target Case-to-Staff Ratio – LCSA Funding Calculator, actual caseload count is divided by the Target FTEs, as of September 30, 2021.

Table 1 - LCSAs Receiving Additional Funding displays LCSAs identified as underfunded, based on SFY 2021-22 funding levels. These counties received a portion of the additional funding included in the SFY 2021 Budget Act. DCSS fiscal guidance requires underfunded LCSAs to utilize the restored funding to increase and retain staffing to lower their case-to-staff ratio.

LCSA staffing levels in underfunded counties increased by 1.2% (47.9 FTEs) since the first quarter, however, many LCSAs continue to experience significant challenges in recruiting qualified staff. These recruitment challenges include a tight labor market resulting in lower-than-expected job applications, fewer candidates accepting employment interviews, and candidates declining job offers. To counteract these challenges, LCSAs have increased recruitments utilizing social media platforms (e.g., LinkedIn, Indeed); implementing and marketing telework and alternate work schedules; and advertising through colleges, government sites (e.g., WorkNet, Merit CalHR), and within local communities.

Further impacting LCSA's ability to increase staffing levels is a higher than expected attrition rate. Ten LCSAs reported that during July-November 2021, 238 positions were filled compared to 164 staff departing. The LCSAs surveyed reported that 44.5% of staff departures were due to other employment opportunities while the remaining departures were due to retirements and attrition.

Table 1 - LCSAs Receiving Additional Funding

	Quarter 4 SFY 2020-21		Quarter 1 SFY 2021-22		Quarter 2 SFY 2021-22		Target Case: Staff Ratio
	Actual Caseload as of 06/30/21	Actual FTEs as of 06/30/21	Actual Caseload as of 09/30/21	Actual FTEs as of 09/30/21	Actual Caseload as of 12/31/21	Actual FTEs as of 12/31/21	
TOTAL	864,178	4,071.5	852,787	4,032.7	846,240	4,080.6	185.4
Alameda	29,548	120.8	29,249	120.8	29,177	116.8	189.1
Colusa 2/	716	3.0	700	1.0	696	1.0	116.7
Contra Costa	25,147	128.0	24,768	122.0	24,419	122.0	185.9
Eastern Sierra	1,046	4.8	1,038	4.7	1,015	4.8	115.3
Fresno	56,920	214.2	56,387	209.2	56,017	226.2	187.9
Glenn	1,580	6.4	1,576	6.2	1,568	4.1	143.3
Imperial	9,496	49.0	9,447	47.0	9,298	45.0	181.1
Kern	49,843	184.8	48,978	186.1	48,892	204.5	183.8
Kings	8,534	40.1	8,462	41.1	8,353	42.5	182.2
Lassen	1,427	7.0	1,402	6.0	1,396	6.0	140.2
Los Angeles 1/	219,869	1,273.0	216,706	1,258.0	214,689	1,255.0	187.9
Madera	6,379	25.0	6,341	24.7	6,330	25.6	171.4
Mariposa 2/	644	4.2	639	5.0	643	5.0	106.5
Merced 2/	14,691	58.7	14,543	60.5	14,480	60.9	182.9
Monterey	13,417	78.5	13,199	78.5	13,056	74.8	183.2
Placer	6,504	34.9	6,359	35.9	6,322	31.9	176.2
Riverside	75,125	289.0	74,545	298.0	74,006	307.0	189.6
Sacramento	67,813	255.0	67,177	262.0	66,550	261.0	190.1
San Bernardino	92,756	387.0	90,833	378.0	89,475	378.0	186.4
San Diego	59,227	281.5	58,875	276.8	59,005	281.5	183.9
San Francisco	9,404	51.1	9,245	50.4	9,151	49.5	184.9
San Joaquin	32,355	123.9	31,905	119.4	31,951	135.4	188.8
Santa Barbara	11,019	61.0	10,858	59.3	10,737	59.7	182.8
Solano	14,019	84.0	13,777	84.0	13,677	80.0	183.0
Stanislaus	24,447	119.7	23,955	116.1	23,758	119.4	185.9
Sutter 2/	3,827	9.0	3,778	7.0	3,777	6.0	171.7
Tehama	3,298	22.7	3,248	18.1	3,245	17.0	179.2
Trinity 2/	693	3.0	679	4.4	667	4.4	113.2
Ventura	18,085	104.5	17,846	100.5	17,705	101.2	186.8
Yolo 2/	6,349	47.7	6,272	52.0	6,185	54.4	177.7

1/ Los Angeles/LCSA received approximately \$40 million in county financial support in SFY2020-21 (including FFP). Thus, FTEs are higher than what would have been possible with only state funding.

2/ The following LCSAs combined resources to form regionalized LCSAs:

- Humboldt, Trinity
- Mariposa, Merced
- Santa Cruz, San Benito
- Sierra, Nevada
- Siskiyou, Modoc
- Colusa, Sutter, Yolo

Table 2 – Adequately Funded LCSAs shows the LCSAs who were identified as adequately funded based on SFY 2021-22 funding levels. The staffing levels for these counties has dropped by 5.3% (59.5 FTEs) during the first half of the fiscal year as attrition brings staffing levels into alignment with targeted case-to-staff ratios.

Table 2 - Adequately Funded LCSAs

	Quarter 4 SFY 2020-21			Quarter 1 SFY 2021-22			Quarter 2 SFY 2021-22			Target Case:Staff Ratio
	Actual Caseload as of 06/30/21	Actual FTEs as of 06/30/21	Case:Staff Ratio as of 06/30/21	Actual Caseload as of 09/30/21	Actual FTEs as of 09/30/21	Actual Case:Staff Ratio as of 09/30/21	Actual Caseload as of 12/31/21	Actual FTEs as of 12/31/21	Actual Case:Staff Ratio as of 12/31/21	
TOTAL	193,606	1,126.8	171.8	191,060	1,102.5	173.3	189,521	1,067.3	177.6	185.4
Butte	9,139	53.0	172.4	9,009	53.0	170.0	8,960	51.0	175.7	187.7
Central Sierra	4,617	27.6	167.3	4,526	24.6	184.0	4,530	25.6	177.0	174.1
Del Norte	2,087	14.0	149.1	2,019	14.0	144.2	2,002	12.0	166.8	155.3
El Dorado	5,077	28.0	181.6	5,005	30.0	167.1	5,000	30.0	166.9	178.8
Humboldt 3/	5,048	25.7	196.7	4,994	26.6	187.6	4,949	25.1	197.2	178.4
Lake	2,512	19.0	132.2	2,482	18.0	137.9	2,490	18.0	138.3	165.5
Marin	3,720	15.8	236.2	3,600	14.8	244.1	3,532	14.8	239.5	153.0
Mendocino	3,065	21.5	142.6	3,019	21.0	143.8	3,003	21.0	143.0	167.7
Napa	2,963	24.4	121.4	2,894	27.0	107.2	2,849	26.6	107.1	160.8
Orange	57,842	328.2	176.2	57,329	322.2	177.9	56,802	311.7	182.2	189.3
Plumas	760	4.0	190.0	731	3.0	243.7	724	4.0	181.0	121.8
San Luis Obispo	3,789	26.8	141.6	3,832	26.8	143.3	3,853	25.8	149.6	174.2
San Mateo	8,123	61.3	132.5	7,967	55.8	142.9	7,841	51.5	152.2	181.1
Santa Clara	27,885	160.0	174.3	27,426	156.6	175.1	26,935	149.6	180.0	188.7
Santa Cruz/San Benito 3/	6,537	39.8	164.2	6,380	38.8	164.4	6,367	38.8	164.1	177.2
Shasta	9,560	48.8	195.9	9,182	47.3	194.1	9,207	46.8	196.9	187.4
Sierra/Nevada 3/	2,573	16.0	160.8	2,526	17.0	148.6	2,509	16.0	156.8	157.9
Siskiyou/Modoc 3/	2,582	17.1	151.1	2,549	14.0	181.7	2,526	14.2	178.0	159.3
Sonoma	10,125	66.5	152.3	10,001	62.5	160.0	9,931	60.5	164.1	183.3
Tulare	22,041	106.5	206.9	22,088	105.7	209.0	21,971	103.5	212.3	189.2
Yuba	3,561	23.0	154.8	3,501	24.0	145.9	3,540	21.0	168.6	166.7

3/ The following LCSAs combined resources to form regionalized LCSAs:

- * Humboldt, Trinity
- * Mariposa, Merced
- * Santa Cruz, San Benito
- * Sierra, Nevada
- * Siskiyou, Modoc
- * Colusa, Sutter, Yolo

IV. CONCLUSION

The Child Support Program continues to recover from the impacts of Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. LCSAs experienced a void in the workforce due to the redirection of staff to support local COVID-19 efforts, holding positions vacant to offset budget reductions, staff movement to other county agencies and retirements. With the restoration of the \$56 million (\$19.1 million GF) in SFY 2021-22, LCSAs are in the process of recovering local staffing levels.

During the second quarter of SFY 2021-22, LCSAs receiving additional funding (Table 1), total staffing increased by 47.9 FTEs. This increase offset the decrease of 38.8 FTEs, as reported in the first quarter. DCSS expects hiring challenges to ease over time and the staffing level to continue increasing. During the first half of the year, adequately funded LCSAs (Table 2), decreased staffing in total by 59.5 FTEs as attrition brings staffing levels into alignment with targeted case-to-staff ratios.