



DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES



Supplemental Report of the 2021 -22 Budget Act Department of Child Support Services

September 1, 2022

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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 \$2.71 billion in state fiscal year (SFY) 2019-20; of which, \$2.2 billion was distributed directly to families and nearly \$500 million was returned to federal, state, and county governments for repayment of public assistance. In SFY 2020-21, the program collected over \$2.77 billion; of which \$2.3 billion was distributed directly to families and approximately \$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 federal fiscal year the funding calculator is updated to capture the most recent caseload, staffing data, and call volumes. This data is used to calculate the target case-to-staff ratio. The current funding calculator reflects the statewide target case-to-staff ratio at 185.4.

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 Reports
- 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 - Displays LCSAs identified as underfunded, based on SFY 2021-22 funding levels. These LCSAs each 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 remained relatively flat in the fourth quarter, decreasing by 0.1% (4.4 FTEs). Many LCSAs maintained or increased their current staffing levels since the June report. Specifically, Eastern Sierra, Glenn, Lassen, Placer, and Stanislaus increased their staffing levels by 5% or more this quarter. Statewide, counties have been implementing aggressive recruitment practices such as creating continuous recruitments for high attrition positions, negotiating higher starting pay within the classification range, offering modified telework schedules and streamlining the recruitment process to complete the process in less time.

Some LCSAs continue to experience significant challenges in recruiting and maintaining qualified staff. These recruitment challenges include a tight labor market resulting in fewer candidates accepting employment interviews, candidates not showing up to interviews, and candidates declining job offers. Further impacting the LCSAs' ability to increase staffing levels, is a higher-than-expected attrition rate. During the third quarter, DCSS sampled five LCSAs who filled 133 positions and realized 140 vacancies. These LCSAs reported that 53.6% of staff departures were due other employment opportunities, where full-time telework is more desirable than a modified telework schedule. Many counties do not have a telework program or offer only modified telework making it difficult for LCSAs to compete with other employers. In addition to full-time telework opportunities, LCSAs are competing with employers who are able to offer higher starting salaries for entry level classifications (e.g., clerical).

To counteract these challenges, some LCSAs have revised the employment certification list life span from twelve months to six months, allowing for a continuous new candidate pool. Additionally, LCSAs are working with their county human resources department to create new classifications that appeal to potential candidates. LCSAs are also recruiting interns and trainees as part of their workforce. LCSAs also continued existing recruitment practices such as social media platforms (e.g., LinkedIn, Indeed); hiring marketing and promotions staff; advertising through colleges, government sites (e.g., WorkNet, Merit CalHR), and within local communities (e.g., job fairs, career expos); and engaging professional recruitment services to mitigate hiring and retention challenges.

Table 1 - LCSAs Receiving Additional Funding

	Quarter 1 SFY 2021-22			Quarter 2 SFY 2021-22			Quarter 3 SFY 2021-22			Quarter 4 SFY 2021-22			Target Case:Staff Ratio
	Actual Caseload as of 09/30/21	Actual FTEs as of 09/30/21	Actual Case:Staff Ratio 09/30/21	Actual Caseload as of 12/31/21	Actual FTEs as of 12/31/21	Actual Case:Staff Ratio 12/31/21	Actual Caseload as of 03/31/22	Actual FTEs as of 03/31/22	Actual Case:Staff Ratio 03/31/22	Actual Caseload as of 06/30/22	Actual FTEs as of 06/30/22	Actual Case:Staff Ratio 06/30/22	
TOTAL	852,787	4,032.7	211.5	846,240	4,080.6	207.4	846,334.0	4,028.7	210.1	855,073	4,024.3	212.5	185.4
Alameda	29,249	120.8	242.1	29,177	116.8	249.8	29,140.0	115.8	251.6	29,460	116.8	252.2	189.1
Contra Costa	24,768	122.0	203.0	24,419	122.0	200.2	24,309.0	123.0	197.6	24,116	119.0	202.7	185.9
Eastern Sierra ^{1/}	1,038	4.7	220.9	1,015	4.8	211.5	1,014.0	4.7	215.7	1,019	7.6	134.1	115.3
Fresno	56,387	209.2	269.6	56,017	226.2	247.7	56,100.0	214.1	262.1	56,970	220.1	258.9	187.9
Glenn	1,576	6.2	254.2	1,568	4.1	379.7	1,575.0	3.5	450.0	1,591	6.7	238.2	143.3
Imperial	9,447	47.0	201.0	9,298	45.0	206.6	9,201.0	46.0	200.0	9,304	45.0	206.8	181.1
Kern	48,978	186.1	263.3	48,892	204.5	239.0	49,094.0	192.5	255.1	50,022	183.2	273.0	183.8
Kings	8,462	41.1	205.9	8,353	42.5	196.5	8,360.0	43.4	192.6	8,440	44.0	191.8	182.2
Lassen	1,402	6.0	233.7	1,396	6.0	232.7	1,405.0	6.0	234.2	1,419	7.0	202.7	140.2
Los Angeles ^{2/}	216,706	1,258.0	172.3	214,689	1,255.0	171.1	215,191.0	1,229.0	175.1	216,804	1,225.0	177.0	187.9
Madera	6,341	24.7	256.7	6,330	25.6	247.3	6,346.0	26.9	235.9	6,388	26.9	237.5	171.4
Mariposa ^{1/}	639	5.0	127.8	643	5.0	128.6	636.0	5.0	127.2	634	3.0	211.3	106.5
Merced ^{1/}	14,543	60.5	240.4	14,480	60.9	237.8	14,462.0	59.6	242.7	14,606	60.6	241.0	182.9
Monterey	13,199	78.5	168.1	13,056	74.8	174.5	13,033.0	75.5	172.6	13,092	77.7	168.5	183.2
Placer	6,359	35.9	177.1	6,322	31.9	198.2	6,282.0	28.9	217.4	6,296	30.9	203.8	176.2
Riverside	74,545	298.0	250.2	74,006	307.0	241.1	73,916.0	328.0	225.4	74,858	340.0	220.2	189.6
Sacramento	67,177	262.0	256.4	66,550	261.0	255.0	66,486.0	266.0	249.9	67,714	269.0	251.7	190.1
San Bernardino	90,833	378.0	240.3	89,475	378.0	236.7	88,874.0	377.0	235.7	89,809	363.0	247.4	186.4
San Diego	58,875	276.8	212.7	59,005	281.5	209.6	59,219.0	268.7	220.4	59,998	263.7	227.5	183.9
San Francisco	9,245	50.4	183.4	9,151	49.5	184.9	9,131.0	49.1	185.8	9,129	48.7	187.4	184.9
San Joaquin	31,905	119.4	267.1	31,951	135.4	236.0	32,319.0	135.6	238.4	32,904	132.4	248.4	188.8
Santa Barbara	10,858	59.3	183.1	10,737	59.7	179.8	10,856.0	64.1	169.4	10,888	61.8	176.2	182.8
Solano	13,777	84.0	164.0	13,677	80.0	171.0	13,655.0	78.0	175.1	13,829	80.0	172.9	183.0
Stanislaus	23,955	116.1	206.3	23,758	119.4	199.0	23,633.0	110.8	213.3	23,682	116.0	204.2	185.9
Tehama	3,248	18.1	179.4	3,245	17.0	190.9	3,232.0	18.0	179.6	3,220	17.4	185.1	179.2
Trinity ^{1/}	679	4.4	154.3	667	4.4	151.6	650.0	4.4	147.7	632	4.4	143.6	113.2
Ventura	17,846	100.5	177.5	17,705	101.2	175.0	17,667.0	97.0	182.2	17,714	95.2	186.1	186.8
Colusa/Sutter/Yolo ^{1/}	10,750	60.0	179.2	10,658	61.4	173.6	10,548.0	58.1	181.5	10,535	59.2	178.0	167.7

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

- * Eastern Sierra: Inyo, Mono
- * Humboldt, Trinity
- * Mariposa, Merced
- * Colusa, Sutter, Yolo

2/ Los Angeles LCSA received approximately \$40 million in county financial support in SFY 2020-21 (including FFP). Thus, FTEs are higher than what would have been possible with only state funding.

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 8.1% (91.2 FTEs) since the first of the fiscal year; as LCSAs bring staffing levels into alignment with the targeted case-to-staff ratios.

Table 2 - Adequately Funded LCSAs

	Quarter 1 SFY 2021-23			Quarter 2 SFY 2021-22			Quarter 3 SFY 2021-21			Quarter 4 SFY 2021-22			Target Case:Staff Ratio
	Actual Caseload as of 09/30/21	Actual FTEs as of 09/30/21	Actual Case:Staff Ratio 09/30/21	Actual Caseload as of 12/31/21	Actual FTEs as of 12/31/21	Actual Case:Staff Ratio 12/31/21	Actual Caseload as of 03/31/22	Actual FTEs as of 03/31/22	Actual Case:Staff Ratio 03/31/22	Actual Caseload as of 06/30/22	Actual FTEs as of 06/30/22	Actual Case:Staff Ratio 06/30/22	
TOTAL	191,060.0	1,102.5	173.3	189,521	1,067.3	177.6	189,537.0	1,051.9	180.2	189,602	1,035.6	183.1	185.4
Butte	9,009	53.0	170.0	8,960	51.0	175.7	8,962	55.0	162.9	8,970	51.0	175.9	189.1
Central Sierra ^{1/}	4,526	24.6	184.0	4,530	25.6	177.0	4,532	25.6	177.0	4,485	25.6	175.2	116.7
Del Norte	2,019	14.0	144.2	2,002	12.0	166.8	2,015	11.5	175.2	2,080	12.5	166.4	185.9
El Dorado	5,005	30.0	167.1	5,000	30.0	166.9	4,973	29.0	171.8	4,980	29.0	172.0	115.3
Humboldt ^{1/}	4,994	26.6	187.6	4,949	25.1	197.2	4,946	24.2	204.5	4,959	25.0	198.0	187.9
Lake	2,482	18.0	137.9	2,490	18.0	138.3	2,542	18.0	141.2	2,577	18.0	143.2	143.3
Marin	3,600	14.8	244.1	3,532	14.8	239.5	3,457	14.7	235.3	3,390	13.7	247.6	181.1
Mendocino	3,019	21.0	143.8	3,003	21.0	143.0	3,009	20.0	150.5	3,020	19.0	158.9	183.8
Napa	2,894	27.0	107.2	2,849	26.6	107.1	2,849	26.7	106.7	2,844	26.9	105.7	182.2
Orange	57,329	322.2	177.9	56,802	311.7	182.2	56,840	300.9	188.9	56,677	289.9	195.5	140.2
Plumas	731	3.0	243.7	724	4.0	181.0	726	4.0	181.5	716	4.0	179.0	187.9
San Luis Obispo	3,832	26.8	143.3	3,853	25.8	149.6	3,925	24.8	158.6	3,985	24.8	161.0	171.4
San Mateo	7,967	55.8	142.9	7,841	51.5	152.2	7,821	50.7	154.3	7,860	48.1	163.6	106.5
Santa Clara	27,426	156.6	175.1	26,935	149.6	180.0	26,712	152.3	175.4	26,345	149.4	176.3	182.9
Santa Cruz/San Benito ^{1/}	6,380	38.8	164.4	6,367	38.8	164.1	6,383	37.8	168.9	6,444	37.8	170.5	183.2
Shasta	9,182	47.3	194.1	9,207	46.8	196.9	9,247	46.1	200.7	9,395	43.9	213.9	176.2
Sierra/Nevada ^{1/}	2,526	17.0	148.6	2,509	16.0	156.8	2,509	15.0	167.3	2,504	18.0	139.1	189.6
Siskiyou/Modoc ^{1/}	2,549	14.0	181.7	2,526	14.2	178.0	2,506	13.2	189.8	2,503	15.3	163.5	190.1
Sonoma	10,001	62.5	160.0	9,931	60.5	164.1	9,927	59.5	166.8	9,921	57.5	172.5	186.4
Tulare	22,088	105.7	209.0	21,971	103.5	212.3	22,118	102.0	216.8	22,331	106.3	210.1	183.9
Yuba	3,501	24.0	145.9	3,540	21.0	168.6	3,538	21.0	168.5	3,616	20.0	180.8	184.9

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

- * Central Sierra: Amador, Calaveras, Modoc, Tuolumne
- * Humboldt, Trinity
- * Santa Cruz, San Benito
- * Sierra, Nevada
- * Siskiyou, Modoc

IV. CONCLUSION

The Child Support Program continues to recover from the impacts of the Coronavirus 2019 (COVID19) pandemic. With the restoration of the \$56 million (\$19.1 million GF) in SFY 2021-22, LCSAs continue to work aggressively to bring their staffing levels into alignment with the targeted case-to-staff ratios.

LCSAs receiving additional funding (Table 1) experienced relatively flat staffing totals, a net decrease of 0.1% (4.4 FTEs) since the third quarter. DCSS expects the staffing levels to begin, or continue, to increase as the labor market recovers from the pandemic and aggressive recruitment efforts are implemented. Adequately funded LCSAs (Table 2) decreased their workforce by 8.1% (91.2 FTEs) since the first of the fiscal year, as efforts made by the LCSAs bring staffing levels into alignment with the targeted case-to-staff ratios.