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# COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES



## BRIANNE K. NADEAU, CHAIRPERSON FISCAL YEAR 2021 COMMITTEE BUDGET REPORT

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**TO:** Members of the Council of the District of Columbia

**FROM:** Councilmember Brianne K. Nadeau  
Chairperson, Committee on Human Services

**DATE:** June 24, 2020

**SUBJECT:** Report and Recommendations of the Committee on [Click here to enter text.](#) on the  
Fiscal Year 2021 Budget for Agencies Under Its Purview

The Committee on Human Services (“Committee”), having conducted hearings and received testimony on the Mayor’s proposed operating and capital budgets for Fiscal Year 2021 (“FY 2021”) for the agencies under its purview, reports its recommendations for review and consideration by the Committee of the Whole.

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## I. SUMMARY

### A. FISCAL YEAR 2021 AGENCY OPERATING BUDGET SUMMARY

Fund Type	FY2019 Actual	FY2020 Approved	Mayor's FY 2021 Proposed	Committee Variance	Committee Approved	Percent Change
<b>CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES AGENCY</b>						
LOCAL FUND	\$156,747,189	\$160,314,620	\$151,788,863	(\$190,000)	\$151,598,863	-5.4%
FEDERAL GRANT FUND	\$50,282,250	\$57,159,318	\$64,006,011		\$64,006,011	12.0%
PRIVATE GRANT FUND	\$86,955	\$0	\$355,812		\$355,812	0.0%
PRIVATE DONATIONS	\$7,394	\$4,560	\$4,560		\$4,560	0.0%
SPECIAL PURPOSE REVENUE FUNDS ('O'TYPE)	\$932,853	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000		\$1,000,000	0.0%
OPERATING INTRA-DISTRICT FUNDS	\$1,875,452	\$1,794,673	\$2,333,664		\$2,333,664	30.0%
<b>TOTAL GROSS FUNDS</b>	<b>\$209,932,093</b>	<b>\$220,273,172</b>	<b>\$219,488,910</b>	<b>(\$190,000)</b>	<b>\$219,298,910</b>	<b>-0.4%</b>
<b>DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES</b>						
LOCAL FUND	\$375,404,211	\$400,123,942	\$406,032,284	\$860,218	\$406,892,502	1.7%
FEDERAL GRANT FUND	\$173,141,122	\$168,822,124	\$169,294,054		\$169,294,054	0.3%
FEDERAL MEDICAID PAYMENTS	\$13,652,605	\$17,423,455	\$16,561,911		\$16,561,911	-4.9%
SPECIAL PURPOSE REVENUE FUNDS ('O'TYPE)	(\$626,588)	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000		\$1,000,000	0.0%
OPERATING INTRA-DISTRICT FUNDS	\$2,681,448	\$2,956,827	\$3,364,439		\$3,364,439	13.8%
<b>TOTAL GROSS FUNDS</b>	<b>\$564,252,797</b>	<b>\$590,326,349</b>	<b>\$596,252,688</b>	<b>\$860,218</b>	<b>\$597,112,905</b>	<b>1.1%</b>
<b>DEPARTMENT ON DISABILITY SERVICES</b>						
LOCAL FUND	\$123,037,128	\$138,251,105	\$131,048,076		\$131,048,076	-5.2%
FEDERAL GRANT FUND	\$29,514,362	\$31,879,590	\$33,233,191		\$33,233,191	4.2%

FEDERAL MEDICAID PAYMENTS	\$14,017,436	\$12,500,621	\$14,513,225		\$14,513,225	16.1%
SPECIAL PURPOSE REVENUE FUNDS ('O'TYPE)	\$12,504,195	\$7,710,291	\$14,754,614		\$14,754,614	91.4%
OPERATING INTRA-DISTRICT FUNDS	\$307,806	\$49,677	\$0		\$0	- 100.0%
<b>TOTAL GROSS FUNDS</b>	<b>\$179,380,927</b>	<b>\$190,391,284</b>	<b>\$193,549,107</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$193,549,107</b>	<b>1.7%</b>
<b>OFFICE OF DISABILITY RIGHTS</b>						
LOCAL FUND	\$1,143,351	\$1,186,759	\$1,153,257		\$1,153,257	-2.8%
FEDERAL GRANT FUND	\$613,531	\$651,296	\$659,844		\$659,844	1.3%
PRIVATE GRANT FUND	\$5,000	\$0			\$0	0.0%
PRIVATE DONATIONS	\$5,520	\$0			\$0	0.0%
OPERATING INTRA-DISTRICT FUNDS	\$186,679	\$292,633	\$292,633		\$292,633	0.0%
<b>TOTAL GROSS FUNDS</b>	<b>\$1,954,081</b>	<b>\$2,130,688</b>	<b>\$2,105,734</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$2,105,734</b>	<b>-1.2%</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$955,519,899</b>	<b>\$1,003,121,493</b>	<b>\$1,011,396,438</b>	<b>\$670,218</b>	<b>\$1,012,066,656</b>	<b>0.9%</b>

## B. FISCAL YEAR 2021 AGENCY FULL-TIME EQUIVALENTS

Agency Full-Time Equivalent Summary						
Fund Type	FY2019 Actual	FY2020 Approved	Mayor's FY 2021 Proposed	Committee Variance	Committee Approved	Percent Change
CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES AGENCY						
LOCAL FUND	630.0	645.0	645.0		645.0	0.0%
FEDERAL GRANT FUND	175.4	183.0	188.5		188.5	3.0%
PRIVATE GRANT FUND	0.0	0.0	2.5		2.5	0.0%
<b>TOTAL FTE</b>	<b>805.4</b>	<b>828.0</b>	<b>836.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>836.0</b>	<b>1.0%</b>
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES						
LOCAL FUND	649.5	694.7	721.1	(5.0)	716.1	3.1%
FEDERAL GRANT FUND	370.6	426.1	416.5		416.5	-2.3%
FEDERAL MEDICAID PAYMENTS	128.9	180.7	145.7		145.7	-19.4%
OPERATING INTRA-DISTRICT FUNDS	19.7	21.0	21.0		21.0	0.0%
<b>TOTAL FTE</b>	<b>1,168.7</b>	<b>1,322.5</b>	<b>1,304.3</b>	<b>(5.0)</b>	<b>1,299.3</b>	<b>-1.8%</b>
DEPARTMENT ON DISABILITY SERVICES						
LOCAL FUND	199.4	211.9	208.3		208.3	-1.7%
FEDERAL GRANT FUND	178.0	182.1	179.7		179.7	-1.3%
FEDERAL MEDICAID PAYMENTS	32.2	34.0	40.0		40.0	17.6%
<b>TOTAL FTE</b>	<b>409.6</b>	<b>428.0</b>	<b>428.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>428.0</b>	<b>0.0%</b>
OFFICE OF DISABILITY RIGHTS						
LOCAL FUND	8.9	9.0	9.0		9.0	0.0%
FEDERAL GRANT FUND	3.0	3.0	3.0		3.0	0.0%
<b>TOTAL FTE</b>	<b>11.9</b>	<b>12.0</b>	<b>12.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>12.0</b>	<b>0.0%</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>2,395.6</b>	<b>2,590.5</b>	<b>2,580.3</b>	<b>(5.0)</b>	<b>2,575.3</b>	<b>-0.6%</b>

## C. FY 2021 - 2026 AGENCY CAPITAL BUDGET SUMMARY

Project No	Project Title	Allotment Scenario	Unspent Allotment (5-16-20)	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	6-year Total
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES (JA0)										
CMSGSC	CASE MANAGEMENT SERVICES- FEDERAL	Available Balances	91,362,631	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CMSGSC Total			91,362,631	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CMSS1C	CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM - GO BOND	Available Balances	713,258	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CMSS1C Total			713,258	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HSW01C	WARD 1 TEMPORARY HOUSING FOR FAMILIES	Available Balances	19,457,523	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HSW01C Total			19,457,523	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HSW03C	WARD 3 TEMPORARY HOUSING FOR FAMILIES	Available Balances	6,582,783	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HSW03C Total			6,582,783	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HSW04C	WARD 4 TEMPORARY HOUSING FOR FAMILIES	Available Balances	752,364	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HSW04C Total			752,364	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HSW05C	WARD 5 TEMPORARY HOUSING FOR FAMILIES	Available Balances	1,088,419	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HSW05C Total			1,088,419	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HSW06C	WARD 6 TEMPORARY HOUSING FOR FAMILIES	Available Balances	4,034,922	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HSW06C Total			4,034,922	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HSW07C	WARD 7 TEMPORARY HOUSING FOR FAMILIES	Available Balances	525,550	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HSW07C Total			525,550	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HSW08C	WARD 8 TEMPORARY HOUSING FOR FAMILIES	Available Balances	925,330	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HSW08C Total			925,330	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
PSH01C	PSH UNITS FOR SENIOR WOMEN	Approved FY20 CIP for FY21-25	0	34,682,000	0	0	0	0	0	34,682,000
		Mayor's Proposed FY21 CIP Change	0	(34,682,000)	29,682,000	0	0	0	0	(5,000,000)
		Available Balances	6,635,847	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		Mayor's Proposed FY20 Supplemental	(5,673,332)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
PSH01C Total			962,515	0	29,682,000	0	0	0	0	29,682,000
SG127C	REPLACEMENT OF ACEDS	Available Balances	54	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SG127C Total			54	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SGAMXC	SEASONAL EMERGENCY SHELTER	Mayor's Proposed FY21 CIP Change	0	2,000,000	0	0	0	0	0	2,000,000
SGAMXC Total			0	2,000,000	0	0	0	0	0	2,000,000
TFS01C	SMALL CAPITAL PROJECTS	Mayor's Proposed FY21 CIP Change	0	1,737,000	0	0	0	0	0	1,737,000
		Available Balances	4,163,355	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TFS01C Total			4,163,355	1,737,000	0	0	0	0	0	1,737,000
THK16C	MP-TEMPORARY AND PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING	Available Balances	279,117	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
THK16C Total			279,117	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

THK17C	EMERGENCY AND TEMPORARY HOUSING UPGRADES	Available Balances	15,164,963	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
THK17C Total			15,164,963	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
THK18C	NEW YORK AVENUE UPGRADES/RENOVATIONS	Approved FY20 CIP for FY21-25	0	2,040,000	0	0	0	0	0	2,040,000
		Available Balances	9,535,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
THK18C Total			9,535,000	2,040,000	0	0	0	0	0	2,040,000
THK19C	EMERGENCY & TEMPORARY HOUSING FOR MEN	Available Balances	44,912,285	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
THK19C Total			44,912,285	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Department of Human Services Total			200,460,070	5,777,000	29,682,000	0	0	0	0	35,459,000
CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES AGENCY (RL0)										
RL31AC	CCWIS IMPLEMENTATION	Approved FY20 CIP for FY21-25	0	7,169,000	8,278,000	4,035,000	517,000	0	0	19,999,000
		Mayor's Proposed FY21 CIP Change	0	0	0	0	899,000	0	0	899,000
		Available Balances	3,475,177	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
RL31AC Total			3,475,177	7,169,000	8,278,000	4,035,000	1,416,000	0	0	20,898,000
Child and Family Services Total			3,475,177	7,169,000	8,278,000	4,035,000	1,416,000	0	0	20,898,000
			203,935,246	12,946,000	37,960,000	4,035,000	1,416,000	0	0	56,357,000

## D. TRANSFERS IN FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

<i>Sending Committee</i>	<i>Amount</i>	<i>FTEs</i>	<i>Receiving agency</i>	<i>Amount</i>	<i>FTEs</i>	<i>Program</i>	<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Recurring or One-Time</i>
Committee on Facilities and Procurement	\$100,000.00		Department of Human Services	\$100,000.00		5000	To support the Homeless Street Outreach Program (5000, 5038, HC45, CSG50)	One-Time
Committee on Facilities and Procurement	\$200,000.00		Department of Human Services	\$200,000.00		5000	To support the Emergency Rental Assistance Program	One-Time
Committee on Health	\$116,000.00		Department of Human Services	\$116,000.00		5000	To support the Emergency Rental Assistance Program	One-Time
Committee on Recreation and Youth Affairs	\$174,054.00		Department of Human Services	\$174,054.00		5000	To support the Emergency Rental Assistance Program	Recurring
Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety	\$250,000.00		Department of Human Services	\$250,000.00		5000	To support the Emergency Rental Assistance Program	One-Time

Committee on Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization			Department of Human Services & Child and Family Services Agency				The Committee will accept all funds transferred from the Committee on Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$840,054.00</b>			<b>\$840,054.00</b>				

## E. TRANSFERS OUT TO OTHER COMMITTEES

<i>Receiving Committee</i>	<i>Amount</i>	<i>FTEs</i>	<i>Receiving agency</i>	<i>Amount</i>	<i>FTEs</i>	<i>Program</i>	<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Recurring or One-Time</i>
Committee on Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization	\$520,000.00		DC Housing Authority	\$520,000.00		6000	To fund rental costs for approximately 22.662 new slots of Permanent Supportive Housing for Individuals (6000, 6020, CSG50)	One-Time
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$520,000.00</b>			<b>\$520,000.00</b>				

## H. SUMMARY OF COMMITTEE BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS

### CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES AGENCY

#### Operating Budget Recommendations

<i>Program</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>CSG</i>	<i>Comments</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>FY2020 Recommendation</i>	<i>FY2021 Recommendation</i>
2000 - AGENCY PROGRAMS	2066 - CHILD PLACEMENT	0050 - SUBSIDIES AND TRANSFERS	Recommended reduction in the Fiscal Year 2020 Revised Local Budget Emergency Act of 2020 to be recognized as one-time funds in Fiscal Year 2021.	One-Time	\$(100,000.00)	
2000 - AGENCY PROGRAMS	2066 - CHILD PLACEMENT	0050 - SUBSIDIES AND TRANSFERS	Reduction in child placement to align the budget with projected spending in FY21.	Recurring		\$(500,000.00)
3000 - COMMUNITY SERVICES	3092 - HEALTHY HORIZON'S CLINIC	0041 - CONTRACTUAL SERVICES - OTHER	Recommended reduction in the Fiscal Year 2020 Revised Local Budget Emergency Act of 2020 to be recognized as one-time funds in Fiscal Year 2021.	One-Time	\$(200,000.00)	
6000 - POLICY AND PLANNING	6010 - POLICY	0011 - REGULAR PAY - CONT FULL TIME	Recommended reduction in the Fiscal Year 2020 Revised Local Budget Emergency Act of 2020 to be recognized as one-time funds in Fiscal Year 2021.	One-Time	\$(50,000.00)	
6000 - POLICY AND PLANNING	6010 - POLICY	0014 - FRINGE BENEFITS - CURR PERSONNEL	Recommended reduction in the Fiscal Year 2020 Revised Local Budget Emergency Act of 2020 to be recognized as one-time funds in Fiscal Year 2021.	One-Time	\$(18,000.00)	

8000 - COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS	8030 - PREVENTION SERVICES	0050 - SUBSIDIES AND TRANSFERS	Provide support to a program that helps fathers gain knowledge and skills to improve their involvement and connection to their children through voluntary home visits; parenting support; child development information and activities; health education and support; family goal planning; adult literacy; legal advocacy; links to community resources; and activities and outings that promote bonding and healthy habits.	One-Time		\$150,000.00
8000 - COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS	8030 - PREVENTION SERVICES	0050 - SUBSIDIES AND TRANSFERS	Support an existing program that provides parenting group sessions and home visitation services to families with a focus on supporting mothers who are homeless, victims of domestic violence, and who are reuniting with their children after returning home	One-Time		\$160,000.00
			<b>LOCAL FUNDS TOTAL</b>		<b>\$(368,000.00)</b>	<b>\$(190,000.00)</b>

### *Capital Budget Recommendations*

The Committee recommends **approval** of the Mayor's proposed FY2021 capital budget for the Child and Family Services Agency.

### *Policy Recommendations*

1. Director Donald stated she believes that the FY2021 proposed budget is sufficient to support all necessary activities of the Agency. However, since the full impact of the pandemic is yet to be realized, CFSA must be prepared to quickly act should additional needs arise. While CFSA has taken proactive steps to create a respite center for youth whose caregiver's have fallen ill due to COVID-19, the policies and procedures for admitting and caring for children in this location have not been made public. While it is notable that CFSA seeks out alternative caregivers, including kin and fictive kin, before admitting children, CFSA should provide greater transparency about the respite centers as well as steps they take to divert youth from the child welfare system. Furthermore, The Committee encourages CFSA to increase recruiting efforts for resource parents to ensure there are placements available for youth coming into care, especially since there may be an uptick as a result of the public health emergency. CFSA should also make temporary emergency policy changes permanent. More specifically, officially abolishing the 6-month waiting period and the in-person registration requirement to enroll in the GCP and the CRCP. Finally, CFSA must prioritize leveraging all available federal resources, including *inter alia*, Family First dollars and various COVID relief funds.
2. CFSA should publicly share their official policy and procedure with oversight of suspected youth in danger of abuse and neglect during distance learning activities. Advocates and multiple public witnesses have shared a real concern that CFSA is not interacting with families that need support, especially during the public health emergency. While the District continues to slowly phase out of the Stay-at-Home order, CFSA must prepare to assist an increased number of youth at risk. CFSA should take steps to increase their visibility to youth that may be at risk of abuse or neglect through various strategies. For example, they could coordinate with DCPS and DCPCS to place a page in distance learning



packets sharing a hotline number for youth to call for immediate assistance. Additionally, CFSA should work closely with Courtney's House and other advocacy groups assisting youth at-risk of being sex trafficked during the public health emergency.

3. As Director Donald explained, older youth and adolescents with trauma history require additional wrap around supports. One support that perhaps needs to be further addressed is tutoring. For the 2018-2019 school year, CFSA had access to grade point averages (GPA) for 84 youth in grades 9-12 enrolled in DCPS and PGCPs schools. The range of GPAs included a low of 0 to a high of 4.42, with an average GPA of 1.69 and a median GPA of 1.61. CFSA should take a closer look into why grades are alarmingly low and what can be done to increase GPAs.

## DEPARTMENT ON DISABILITY SERVICES

### *Operating Budget Recommendations*

The Committee recommends **approval** of the FY2021 operating budget for the Department on Disability Services as proposed by the Mayor.

### *Policy Recommendations*

1. The FY2021 proposed budget addresses workforce shortages faced by disability service providers by making some investments in order to pay direct support professionals a more competitive wage. However, it does not go far enough. DDS must work with DHCF to consider creative solutions to make up the difference in the revenue streams wage increases for direct support professionals in the FY2021 proposed budget, and the funding necessary for providers to pay more competitive wages to DSPs. The Committee recommends filling this gap by partially funding the "Disability Service Provider Payment Rate Act of 2019".
2. At the 2020 Performance Oversight Hearing for DDS, and the Committee Budget Hearing, public witnesses expressed the need for DDS to expand its services to include people with developmental disabilities who do not have an intellectual disability. The Committee plans on hosting a working group with members of the disability services community to better understand the needs, the costs, and best next steps. The Committee will invite DDS to participate in the working group and hopes the agency will engage in conversations about what it means to expand eligibility.
3. DDS has taken several steps in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, and the subsequent public health emergency. These steps include hiring quality resource specialists, hiring nurses with Covid-19 training, working with the District of Columbia Department of health and the Public Health Lab on to provide guidance to providers on Covid-19-related matters, and creating an avenue for providers to share mitigation strategies. Additionally, DDS has made itself available on weekly calls with providers to answer questions and provide guidance. DDS is now publicly posting Covid-19 testing data of its service recipients online. The Committee encourages DDS to continue these efforts, and remain in

communication with the Committee as procedures changes and the District enters different phases of the ReOpen DC.

## DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

### Operating Budget Recommendations

Program	Activity	Service	CSG	Comments	Frequency	FY2021 Recommendation
2000 - ECONOMIC SECURITY ADMINISTRATION	2040 - ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION SERVICES	E110 - ELIG SVCS: OFFICE OF DEPUTY	0011 - REGULAR PAY - CONT FULL TIME	Eliminate vacant FTE #00016463 salary	Recurring	(54,845.85)
2000 - ECONOMIC SECURITY ADMINISTRATION	2040 - ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION SERVICES	E110 - ELIG SVCS: OFFICE OF DEPUTY	0014 - FRINGE BENEFITS - CURR PERSONNEL	Eliminate vacant FTE #00016463 fringe	Recurring	(13,629.02)
2000 - ECONOMIC SECURITY ADMINISTRATION	2040 - ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION SERVICES	E115 - ELIG SVCS: IMA/ IMD	0011 - REGULAR PAY - CONT FULL TIME	Eliminate vacant FTE #0023563 salary	Recurring	(44,330.50)
2000 - ECONOMIC SECURITY ADMINISTRATION	2040 - ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION SERVICES	E115 - ELIG SVCS: IMA/ IMD	0014 - FRINGE BENEFITS - CURR PERSONNEL	Eliminate vacant FTE #00023563 fringe	Recurring	(11,015.99)
2000 - ECONOMIC SECURITY ADMINISTRATION	2040 - ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION SERVICES	E154 - STRATEGIC PLANNING & PROJECT MGMT	0011 - REGULAR PAY - CONT FULL TIME	Eliminate vacant FTE #9941 salary	Recurring	(71,845.00)
2000 - ECONOMIC SECURITY ADMINISTRATION	2040 - ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION SERVICES	E154 - STRATEGIC PLANNING & PROJECT MGMT	0014 - FRINGE BENEFITS - CURR PERSONNEL	Eliminate vacant FTE #9941 fringe	Recurring	(17,853.00)
5000 - FAMILY SERVICES	5014 - EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE (ERAP)	ERAP - EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE (ERAP)	0050 - SUBSIDIES AND TRANSFERS	One-time enhancement to the Emergency Rental Assistance Program supported by a transfer in from the Committee on Facilities and Procurement.	One-Time	200,000.00
5000 - FAMILY SERVICES	5014 - EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE (ERAP)	ERAP - EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE (ERAP)	0050 - SUBSIDIES AND TRANSFERS	One-time enhancement to the Emergency Rental Assistance Program supported by a transfer in from the Committee on Health.	One-Time	116,000.00
5000 - FAMILY SERVICES	5014 - EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE (ERAP)	ERAP - EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE (ERAP)	0050 - SUBSIDIES AND TRANSFERS	One-time enhancement to the Emergency Rental Assistance Program supported by a transfer in from the Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety.	One-Time	250,000.00
5000 - FAMILY SERVICES	5014 - EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE (ERAP)	ERAP - EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE (ERAP)	0050 - SUBSIDIES AND TRANSFERS	Recurring enhancement to the Emergency Rental Assistance Program supported by a transfer in from the Committee on Recreation and Youth Affairs.	Recurring	174,054.00
5000 - FAMILY SERVICES	5034 - PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING - INDIV	SH61 - PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE	0050 - SUBSIDIES AND TRANSFERS	Enhancement for Permanent Supportive Housing for individuals to fund wrap around services	Recurring	321,600.00

		HOUSING - INDIV		and supports for up to 50 new Permanent Supportive Housing vouchers.		
5000 - FAMILY SERVICES	5037 - HOMELESS SERVICES CONTINUUM - FAMILIES	HC78 - SHELTER OPERATIONS: FAMILIES	0011 - REGULAR PAY - CONT FULL TIME	Eliminate vacant FTE #90694 salary	Recurring	(89,534.00)
5000 - FAMILY SERVICES	5037 - HOMELESS SERVICES CONTINUUM - FAMILIES	HC78 - SHELTER OPERATIONS: FAMILIES	0011 - REGULAR PAY - CONT FULL TIME	Eliminate vacant FTE #90704 salary	Recurring	(25,500.00)
5000 - FAMILY SERVICES	5037 - HOMELESS SERVICES CONTINUUM - FAMILIES	HC78 - SHELTER OPERATIONS: FAMILIES	0014 - FRINGE BENEFITS - CURR PERSONNEL	Eliminate vacant FTE #90694 fringe	Recurring	(22,383.00)
5000 - FAMILY SERVICES	5037 - HOMELESS SERVICES CONTINUUM - FAMILIES	HC78 - SHELTER OPERATIONS: FAMILIES	0014 - FRINGE BENEFITS - CURR PERSONNEL	Eliminate vacant FTE #90704 fringe	Recurring	(8,500.00)
5000 - FAMILY SERVICES	5038 - HOMELESS SERVICES CONTINUUM-INDIVIDUALS	HC45 - HSC-STREET OUTREACH	0050 - SUBSIDIES AND TRANSFERS	One-time enhancement to support Homeless Street Outreach supported by a transfer in from the Committee on Facilities and Procurement.	One-Time	100,000.00
5000 - FAMILY SERVICES	5038 - HOMELESS SERVICES CONTINUUM-INDIVIDUALS	HC45 - HSC-STREET OUTREACH	0050 - SUBSIDIES AND TRANSFERS	One-time enhancement to support increased funding for Homeless Street Outreach.	One-Time	58,000.00
				<b>LOCAL FUNDS TOTAL</b>		<b>860,217.64</b>

### *Capital Budget Recommendations*

The Committee recommends **approval** of the Mayor's proposed FY2021 capital budget for the Department of Human Services.

### *Policy Recommendations*

1. The Committee supports all efforts made by the District to aggressively pursue and creatively allocated federal funds to cover costs associated with the current public health emergency and the subsequent recovery. In the short-term, aggressive pursuit of federal funds should be focused on the immediate reduction in density within congregate shelters, the expansion of testing, and increased investment in rental assistance.
2. During the public health emergency, the District has reduced barriers to accessing public benefits like SNAP, TANF, and Alliance. These efforts have included the launch of an online portal and app for public benefits<sup>1</sup> and implementing temporary increases to SNAP benefits<sup>2</sup> for households receiving less than the maximum benefit amount. The Administration also temporarily authorized automatic renewal of these various benefit

<sup>1</sup> The DC Benefits Portal, available at <https://dcbenefits.dhs.dc.gov/>.

<sup>2</sup> See, Curt Campbell, *DC Provides Temporary SNAP Increases to Meet Nutritional Needs*, April 7, 2020, available at <https://www.makingjusticereal.org/dc-provides-temporary-snap-increases-to-meet-nutritional-needs>.

programs to ensure families are able to social distance without fear of losing critical supports.<sup>3</sup> However, all of the waivers about enrollment and renewal, as well as the increases to certain benefits are up to the whim of the federal government and/or contingent on the continuation of the Mayor's declaration of a public health emergency. The Committee is concerned that the end of the public health emergency could result in a benefits cliff for many and recommends that that DHS begin engagement with Council and relevant stakeholders early to ensure that an exit ramp is put in place that takes advantage of the newly created technology and automation.

3. With the highest per capita incarceration rate of any state in the US,<sup>4</sup> it has been found that returning citizens to the District make up one of the largest inflows into the homeless services continuum for unaccompanied adults. The Committee recommends that the agency collaborate with stakeholders, ICH, and other sister agencies to develop a program to help administer re-entry planning for incarcerated DC residents. Furthermore, the Committee believes that ending mass incarceration should be seen as a critical path to ending chronic homelessness.
4. Every year, some number of individuals are denied ERAP because funds are depleted by the end of the year. While DHS tracks denials due to a lack of funds, it was suggested at the Budget Oversight Hearing that the reported numbers may not account for individuals who are prevented from applying because a provider stopped scheduling appointments due to a lack of funds. The Committee recommends that DHS develop a policy and guidance for all ERAP providers to track all instances in which ERAP is denied due to lack of funding, whether or not a formal appointment is scheduled.

## OFFICE OF DISABILITY RIGHTS

### *Operating Budget Recommendations*

The Committee recommends **approval** of the FY2021 operating budget for the Department on Disability Services as proposed by the Mayor.

### *Policy Recommendations*

1. In the FY2019 budget report, the Committee recognized that the FY2018 recommendation, to assess and create a plan for bringing the District of Columbia Public Charter Schools ("DCPCS") into compliance with applicable federal and local disability rights laws, was not implemented due to turnover in leadership at ODR. At its FY2020 Budget Oversight Hearing, ODR stated that they believe each public charter school is individually responsible for complying with disability rights laws. The

<sup>3</sup> See, Department of Human Services, Quick Reference to DHS Modified Services during COVID-19 Emergency, available [https://dhs.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/dhs/service\\_content/attachments/DHS%20Modified%20Operations%20one-pager\\_v3\\_5-15-2020\\_FIN\\_0.pdf](https://dhs.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/dhs/service_content/attachments/DHS%20Modified%20Operations%20one-pager_v3_5-15-2020_FIN_0.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> "States of Incarceration: The Global Context 2018," Peter Wagner and Wendy Sawyer. Prison Policy Initiative. June 2018. Available at <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/global/2018.html>.

Committee recommends again, as it did in the FY2020 budge report, that ODR work more directly with OSSE and individual public charter schools to bring their facilities in compliance.

DRAFT

## II. AGENCY FISCAL YEAR 2021 BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS

### A. INTRODUCTION

The Committee is responsible for matters concerning welfare; social services; youth affairs (other than juvenile justice); homelessness; and disability services. To this end, the Committee is also accountable for programmatic and budgetary oversight of the Department of Human Services, the Child and Family Services Agency, the Department on Disability Services, the Office of Disability Rights, and the Interagency Council on Homelessness. The Committee works closely with these agencies, District residents, and community advocates to craft careful and deliberate policies for the human services realm and relevant programming.

The Committee is chaired by Councilmember Brianne K. Nadeau. The other members of the Committee are Councilmembers David Grosso, Brandon T. Todd, Robert C. White, Jr. and Trayon White, Sr.

The Committee held performance and budget oversight hearings on the following dates:

<b><i>Performance Oversight Hearings</i></b>	
<b>January 29, 2020</b>	Department of Human Services Interagency Council on Homelessness
<b>February 11, 2020</b>	Department on Disability Services Office of Disability Rights
<b>February 12, 2020</b>	Child and Family Services Agency
<b>February 18, 2020</b>	Additional Performance Oversight Hearing for all Committee Agencies at the Rise Demonstration Center

  

<b><i>Budget Oversight Hearings</i></b>	
<b>May 22, 2020</b>	Department on Disability Services – Public Witnesses Child and Family Services Agency – Public Witnesses Department of Human Services – Public Witnesses
<b>May 26, 2020</b>	Department on Disability Services – Gov. Witnesses Child and Family Services Agency – Gov. Witnesses Department of Human Services – Gov. Witnesses

The Committee received important comments from members of the public during these hearings. Copies of witness testimony are included in this report as *Attachments A-C*. A video recording of the hearings can be obtained through the Office of Cable Television or at [oct.dc.gov](http://oct.dc.gov). The Committee continues to welcome public input on the agencies and activities within its purview.

## B. CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES AGENCY

### 1. AGENCY MISSION AND OVERVIEW

The mission of the Child and Family Services Agency (“CFSA” or “Agency”) is to ensure the safety, permanence, and well-being of abused and neglected children in the District of Columbia and to strengthen their families. CFSA operates through the following 8 divisions:

**Agency Programs** – provides case management for children and youth in foster care. The Agency Programs administration works to ensure the safety and well-being of children and youth in care while moving them to permanence as quickly as possible via reunification, guardianship, or adoption.

This division contains the following 7 activities:

- **Permanency** – provides case management and permanency support for children from the inception of concurrent permanency planning through finalization of reunification, guardianship or adoption;
- **Teen Services** – provides permanency support, consultation, technical assistance, training, and case management for older youth between the ages of 15 to 21. Teen Services works to achieve permanence for older youth while at the same time providing life skills training, vocational and educational support, and transitional assistance to prepare them for independence after leaving foster care;
- **Family Resources** – provides foster and adoptive resource recruitment and support services to current and potential foster, kinship, and adoptive parents;
- **Facility Licensing** – provides licensing for CFSA’s foster homes;
- **Contract Monitoring** – provides oversight of CFSA purchases via contracts and ensures program outcomes and adherence to contractual requirements;
- **Child Placement** – identifies living arrangements for children who must enter foster care, including family foster homes, group care, and independent living programs; and
- **Kinship Support** – identifies viable family resources, conducts family team meetings, facilitates placements with relatives, expedites licensing of kinship foster parents, and provides supportive services to kinship caregivers.

**Community Services** – is composed of investigative social workers, medical professionals, social workers, case managers, and other professionals responsible for monitoring and overseeing services to children who are placed in foster care. Community Services operates CFSA’s on-site clinic and the child abuse hotline.

This division contains the following 4 activities:

- **Child Protective Services - Investigations** – receives reports of suspected child abuse or neglect through the hotline, investigates families whose children are alleged victims of abuse or neglect, and makes determinations regarding immediate removals and/or court referrals;
- **Clinical Health Services** – provides medical and behavioral health screenings prior to placement and expert consultation in health, residential treatment, developmental disabilities, and 24/7 on-call support for medical and mental health services;
- **Nurse Care Management** – supports a cadre of nurse care professionals to support the medical needs of children in care; and
- **Healthy Horizons Clinic** – provides medical health screenings prior to placement and expert consultation in health, residential treatment, developmental disabilities, and 24/7 on-call support for medical services.

**Adoption and Guardian Subsidy** – supports families caring for children and providing a long-term permanent placement for children.

This division contains the following 3 activities:

- **Adoptions and Guardianship Subsidy** – provides financial assistance services to eligible relatives and adoptive parents so that they can maintain children in permanent homes;
- **Guardianship Subsidy** – provides financial assistance services to eligible relatives and non-family caregivers so that they can maintain children in permanent homes; and
- **Grandparent Subsidy** – provides financial assistance services to eligible grandparents so that they can maintain children in permanent homes.

**Policy and Planning** – serves as the “state-level” function for District child welfare and supports CFSA’s policy development, planning and data analysis, Fair Hearings, D.C. Child Protection Register, quality assurance, and training functions. In addition, Policy and Planning licenses foster parents, group homes and independent living facilities that provide services to youth.

This division contains the following 3 activities:

- **Policy** – develops agency policy and provides review, interpretation and decision-making services to the Director and staff so that they can make decisions consistent with best practices and with statutory and regulatory requirements;
- **Planning and Data Analysis** – provides reporting, data analysis, technical assistance, and research services to the agency and external stakeholders in order to facilitate short and long-term agency strategic planning; and



- **Quality Assurance** – provides assessment, monitoring, and recommendation services to CFSA staff and key stakeholders to improve child welfare practice. In addition, Quality Assurance is responsible for facilitating qualitative review processes such as child fatality reviews and quality service reviews in order to identify areas of strength and need in line with best practices and child welfare standards.

**Clinical Practice (Well-Being)** – provides comprehensive well-being services for children in CFSA’s care, including educational services, liaisons for substance abuse and domestic violence services, and day care. This division is responsible for implementing CFSA’s trauma-informed practice.

**Community Partnerships** – forges community partnerships and supports community-based programs and strategies designed to strengthen families and promote safety and stability for these families as well as at-risk children.

This division contains the following 4 activities:

- **Community Partnership Services** – provides staffing support and oversight of community-based prevention, supportive and after-care services to families and at-risk children in their homes, maximizing the use of informal and formal support systems;
- **In-Home** – serves families in-home through social work units co-located with community partners to provide community-based family supportive services; and
- **Prevention Services** – provides direct community-based prevention, supportive, and after-care services to families and at-risk children in their homes, maximizing the use of informal and formal support systems; and
- **Families First DC** – supports a continuum of prevention services focused on stabilizing and strengthening families. Services are provided through neighborhood-based resource centers, integrating government initiatives and programs to build on family and community strengths and meet families’ complex and interconnected needs.

**Agency Management** – provides for administrative support and the required tools to achieve operational and programmatic results. This division is standard for all agencies using performance-based budgeting.

**Agency Financial Operations** – provides comprehensive and efficient financial management services to, and on behalf of, District agencies so that the financial integrity of the District of Columbia is maintained. This division is standard for all agencies using performance-based budgeting.

## 2. FISCAL YEAR 2020 OPERATING BUDGET

### Proposed Operating Budget Summary

Fund Type	FY2019 Actual	FY2020 Approved	Mayor's FY 2021 Proposed	Committee Variance	Committee Approved	Percent Change
LOCAL FUND	\$156,747,189	\$160,314,620	\$151,788,863	(\$190,000)	\$151,598,863	-5.4%
FEDERAL GRANT FUND	\$50,282,250	\$57,159,318	\$64,006,011		\$64,006,011	12.0%
PRIVATE GRANT FUND	\$86,955	\$0	\$355,812		\$355,812	0.0%
PRIVATE DONATIONS	\$7,394	\$4,560	\$4,560		\$4,560	0.0%
SPECIAL PURPOSE REVENUE FUNDS ('O' TYPE)	\$932,853	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000		\$1,000,000	0.0%
OPERATING INTRA-DISTRICT FUNDS	\$1,875,452	\$1,794,673	\$2,333,664		\$2,333,664	30.0%
<b>TOTAL GROSS FUNDS</b>	<b>\$209,932,093</b>	<b>\$220,273,172</b>	<b>\$219,488,910</b>	<b>(\$190,000)</b>	<b>\$219,298,910</b>	<b>-0.4%</b>

Comptroller Source Group	FY 2019 Actuals	FY 2020 Approved	Mayor's FY 2021 Proposed	Committee Variance	Committee Approved	Percent Change
<b>CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES AGENCY</b>						
11-REGULAR PAY - CONT FULL TIME	\$68,468,739	\$71,667,631	\$71,553,104		\$71,553,104	-0.2%
12-REGULAR PAY - OTHER	\$207,220	\$859,743	\$48,429		\$48,429	-94.4%
13-ADDITIONAL GROSS PAY	\$1,901,348	\$1,355,422	\$1,355,422		\$1,355,422	0.0%
14-FRINGE BENEFITS - CURR PERSONNEL	\$16,611,034	\$18,857,184	\$18,417,900		\$18,417,900	-2.3%
15-OVERTIME PAY	\$1,373,882	\$1,345,564	\$1,345,564		\$1,345,564	0.0%
20-SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS	\$208,531	\$252,795	\$252,795		\$252,795	0.0%
30-ENERGY, COMM. AND BLDG RENTALS	\$547,937	\$590,909	\$727,279		\$727,279	23.1%
31-TELECOMMUNICATIONS	\$864,520	\$1,000,630	\$1,000,630		\$1,000,630	0.0%
32-RENTALS - LAND AND STRUCTURES	\$5,568,728	\$5,812,691	\$6,833,679		\$6,833,679	17.6%
33-JANITORIAL SERVICES	\$51,250	\$60,641	\$60,641		\$60,641	0.0%
34-SECURITY SERVICES	\$2,319,759	\$2,459,864	\$2,412,698		\$2,412,698	-1.9%
35-OCCUPANCY FIXED COSTS	\$1,331,099	\$1,180,680	\$493,858		\$493,858	-58.2%
40-OTHER SERVICES AND CHARGES	\$4,343,806	\$3,114,099	\$3,380,094		\$3,380,094	8.5%
41-CONTRACTUAL SERVICES - OTHER	\$9,335,869	\$11,410,354	\$13,432,593		\$13,432,593	17.7%
50-SUBSIDIES AND TRANSFERS	\$95,020,969	\$99,311,757	\$97,190,018	(\$190,000)	\$97,000,018	-2.3%
70-EQUIPMENT & EQUIPMENT RENTAL	\$1,777,402	\$993,207	\$984,207		\$984,207	-0.9%
<b>TOTAL GROSS FUNDS</b>	<b>\$209,932,093</b>	<b>\$220,273,172</b>	<b>\$219,488,910</b>	<b>(\$190,000)</b>	<b>\$219,298,910</b>	<b>-0.4%</b>

Program	FY2019 Actual	FY2020 Approved	Mayor's FY 2021 Proposed	Committee Variance	Committee Approved	Percent Change
0100 - AGENCY FINANCIAL OPERATIONS	\$2,688,229	\$2,912,253	\$2,948,858		\$2,948,858	1.3%
1000 - AGENCY MANAGEMENT	\$36,708,034	\$41,233,279	\$43,384,579		\$43,384,579	5.2%
2000 - AGENCY PROGRAMS	\$75,947,592	\$72,176,740	\$74,662,541	(\$500,000)	\$74,162,541	2.8%
3000 - COMMUNITY SERVICES	\$28,553,158	\$30,659,325	\$30,700,043		\$30,700,043	0.1%
4000 - ADOPTION AND GUARDIAN SUBSIDY PROGRAM	\$31,962,201	\$32,339,546	\$29,875,253		\$29,875,253	-7.6%
6000 - POLICY AND PLANNING	\$5,003,294	\$6,152,286	\$6,123,589		\$6,123,589	-0.5%
7000 - CLINICAL PRACTICE	\$4,740,856	\$6,950,365	\$6,669,613		\$6,669,613	-4.0%
8000 - COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS	\$24,328,729	\$27,849,377	\$25,124,434	\$310,000	\$25,434,434	-8.7%

TOTAL GROSS FUNDS	\$209,932,093	\$220,273,172	\$219,488,910	(\$190,000)	\$219,298,910	-0.4%
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### Committee Analysis and Comments

***Prevention Services – Narrowing the “Front Door”:*** One of the Child and Family Services Agency’s (“CFSA”) core tenets is that “children grow up best with their families” and that the Agency removes “children only when necessary to keep them safe.” For the past seven years, CFSA has focused on reducing the number of children that come under their care through investment in prevention services, a practice the Agency calls “narrowing the front door.” Over this time, CFSA has seen the number of youth in out-of-home care decrease from 1,549 youth in FY2012, 849 youth in February of 2019, and 768 youth as of March 4, 2020.<sup>5</sup> The FY2021 proposed budget allocates \$46.2 million for 875 slots for youth in out-of-home care compared to \$42.7 million for 906 slots in FY2020.<sup>6</sup> There is a great deal of anecdotal evidence that CFSA’s deliberate investment in prevention has played a large role in narrowing the front door. However, there continues to be uncertainty around how much funding will be available from federal sources, what exact programs will be implemented by the Families First DC Success Centers, as well as the implications of the current public health emergency on families and youth most at-risk of entering the child welfare system. Amidst this great uncertainty, the Committee is concerned that CFSA decided to make a net reduction in Prevention Services funding of about \$1.8 million.<sup>7</sup> As these uncertainties become clearer, the Committee will provide vigilant oversight of CFSA’s programmatic decisions.

**Family First Prevention Services Act.** The Family First Prevention Services Act (“Family First Act”) was signed into law as part of the Bipartisan Budget Act on February 9, 2018.<sup>8</sup> This act reforms the federal child welfare financing streams, Title IV-E and Title IV-B of the Social Security Act, to provide services to families who are at imminent risk of entering the child welfare system.<sup>9</sup> The Family First Act establishes narrower criteria for reimbursement than the Title IV-E Waiver.<sup>10</sup> The Family First Act requires each child to be determined eligible to receive a service (candidacy) and that the service be within the scope of an evidence-based ranking criteria of promising, supported, or well supported.<sup>11</sup>

At the 2019 Budget Oversight Hearing, Director Donald testified that the end of the Title IV-E Waiver meant a significant loss in federal funding from FY2019 to FY2020.<sup>12</sup> Specifically, the \$14.6 million of Title IV-E waiver funds that CFSA originally projected to claim in FY2019 would no longer be available in FY2020. CFSA believed that some of these lost federal prevention funds

<sup>5</sup> 2020 Performance Oversight Responses, Child and Family Services Agency, Q91.

<sup>6</sup> *Id.*

<sup>7</sup> FY2021 Child and Family Services Agency Budget Chapter, Table RL0-4, Line 8030 (Prevention Services) reflects a decrease of \$5.3 million and Line 8040 (Families First D.C.) reflects an increase of \$3.48. Because Families First D.C. is shown on a separate line, the difference of funding is a total reduction of \$1.82 million.

<sup>8</sup> 42 U.S.C. 671(e)

<sup>9</sup> Fact Sheet: Family First Prevention Services Act, available at <https://campaignforchildren.org/resources/fact-sheet/fact-sheet-family-first-prevention-services-act/>.

<sup>10</sup> *Budget Oversight Hearing: Child and Family Services Agency*. April 11, 2019. Testimony of Brenda Donald, Director, Child and Family Services Agency.

<sup>11</sup> *Id.*

<sup>12</sup> *Id.*

would be offset by approximately \$5 million from the Family First Act and approximately \$1.6 million from the Family First Collaboratives Case Management fund. However, this has not come to fruition. CFSA now projects to claim close to nothing under the Family First Act in FY2020. Further, Director Donald testified at the Budget Oversight Hearing that CFSA expects to receive only \$80,000 in federal funding under the Family First Act in FY2021.<sup>13</sup> Through a Memorandum of Understanding between CFSA and the Department of Health (DOH), CFSA expects to accommodate 40 families in the Parents as Teachers Home Visiting program with these funds.<sup>14</sup> CFSA is currently reviewing the requirements of the Family First Act to get a clear understanding of federal reimbursement opportunities that may exist for these prevention services.<sup>15</sup>

The challenges that CFSA has faced in implementing the Family First Act are not unique to the District, and for that reason, the federal government enacted the Family First Transition Act, which is serving as life raft for prevention funding until a more long-term solution is instituted by the federal Children's Bureau.

Family First Transition Act. In 2020, the federal government enacted the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act.<sup>16</sup> This spending bill includes the Family First Transition Act ("Transition Act"), which is one of several recent policy developments that support states as they face challenges in implementing the Family First Act by providing flexible funding for states with expiring Title IV-E waivers.<sup>17</sup> More specifically, the Transition Act "helps ensure that the Family First Act achieves its intended vision of helping children remain safely at home with their families rather than experience the trauma of entering foster care."<sup>18</sup> Under the Transition Act, CFSA expects to claim \$6.6 million in FY2020 and \$6.2 million in FY2021. As seen above, this attempt by Congress to keep states whole as they gear up to implement the new claiming opportunities under the Family First Act will be realized in FY2020 and FY2021. This is a critical source of revenue for the District, especially given the strains on local resources.

The Transition Act ensures that the decrease in federally funding as a result of transitioning from the Title IV-E waiver to Family First Act will be gradual over the next two years.<sup>19</sup> In looking ahead, as CFSA noted at the Stakeholder Community Briefing, without further federal action, the Agency anticipates a significant loss of revenue beginning in FY2022.<sup>20</sup> Planning for this "significant loss" in revenue early will be necessary to anticipate filling the financial gaps the loss of federal funding will leave.<sup>21</sup>

Families First DC Initiative. The goal of Families First DC is to create a network of primary prevention services and neighborhood-driven resources focused on strengthening supports

<sup>13</sup> *Budget Oversight Hearing: Child and Family Services Agency*. May 26, 2020. Testimony of Brenda Donald, Director, Child and Family Services Agency.

<sup>14</sup> *Id.*

<sup>15</sup> *Id.*

<sup>16</sup> H.R. Res. 1865, 116th Cong. (2020) (enacted).

<sup>17</sup> Elizabeth Jordan & Amy McKlinton, *The Family First Transition Act Provides New Implementation Supports for States and Tribes*, 1 (2020).

<sup>18</sup> *Id.*

<sup>19</sup> *Id.*

<sup>20</sup> CFSA Responses to Budget Engagement Forum Community Questions, May 21, 2020.

<sup>21</sup> CFSA Stakeholder Community Briefing, May 20, 2020.

upstream.<sup>22</sup> At the FY2020 budget oversight hearing, Director Donald described the Families First DC initiative as follows: <sup>23</sup>

Families First DC will alter the way services are delivered in 10 communities in Wards 7 and 8 where barriers to opportunity, achievement, and well-being are most acute. This whole community, whole family approach will partner with neighborhood-based resource centers that will integrate government initiatives and programs to build on family and community strengths and meet families' complex, interconnected needs. In addition to a small staff, each center will have a \$250,000 fund to provide community-driven services that fill critical gaps identified by each community. Residents of the neighborhoods, led by a Community Advisory Committee, will determine the services offered at their center, as well as how the grant funds will be spent.

In the FY2019 proposed budget, the Mayor allocated about \$4 million of local funds to implement the Families First DC initiative.<sup>24</sup> Because of concerns that the initiative was not fully developed, the Committee recommended a one-time \$1 million reduction of funding for the initiative in FY2020. Although the Committee's FY20 reduction was only one-time, the Mayor's proposed budget did not return the funding level in FY2021 to \$4,000,000. Instead, they only restored about \$489,000.<sup>25</sup> Despite this reduction in funding, it is the Committee's understanding that CFSA will allocate grants of \$350,000 to each of the ten Family Success Centers in FY2021.<sup>26</sup> The ten Family Success Centers were originally slated to open October 2020 and notwithstanding the current public health emergency, they are still on target to open on time. The Success Centers will provide services that will be decided by their respective communities during the FY2020 planning process.<sup>27</sup> CFSA is seeking to avoid redundancies by conducting a full gap analysis, partnering with other agencies to integrate services, and requiring grantees partner with other community-based organizations and businesses to unify and empower using a holistic approach.<sup>28</sup> The Committee on Human Services looks forward to the opening of the Success Centers and will closely track the performance outcomes to confirm they align with CFSA's overall prevention strategy.

<sup>22</sup> Families First DC Snapshot, available at [https://cfssa.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/cfssa/page\\_content/attachments/FFDC\\_Fact%20Sheet\\_wgrantees.pdf](https://cfssa.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/cfssa/page_content/attachments/FFDC_Fact%20Sheet_wgrantees.pdf).

<sup>23</sup> *Budget Oversight Hearing: Child and Family Services Agency*. April 11, 2019. Testimony of Brenda Donald, Director, Child and Family Services Agency.

<sup>24</sup> Press Release, *Mayor Bowser Invests Nearly \$4 Million to Build Ten Family Success Centers in Wards 7 and 8* (December 16, 2019).

<sup>25</sup> The Mayor's *Errata* letter indicated that the Council should restore \$530,000, which was removed from the Families First DC budget as a result of "a drafting error." However, the Mayor's letter did not offer any new sources of funding to correct their mistake.

<sup>26</sup> *Budget Oversight Hearing: Child and Family Services Agency*. May 26, 2020. Testimony of Brenda Donald, Director, Child and Family Services Agency (the difference in total funding of \$4,019,484 and \$3,500,000 will support staff and technical assistance to help grantees).

<sup>27</sup> 2020 Performance Oversight Responses, Child and Family Services Agency, Q66 ("Providers will work closely with Community Advisory Councils to determine which services befit the community's needs").

<sup>28</sup> *Id.* at Q68.

While federal dollars have not been identified to help fund Families First D.C., Director Donald vowed to continue working with federal partners to stay abreast of new programs as they become available to receive greater federal funding for prevention and placement services.<sup>29</sup>

Grandparent and Close Relative Caregiver Subsidy. The Grandparent Caregiver Program (“GCP”) helps low-income District residents who are raising their grandchildren, great-grandchildren, great-nieces, and great-nephews. Those who qualify may get money every month to help care for children living with them.<sup>30</sup> Absent this subsidy, caregivers might lack the financial resources to care for these children, thus placing them at heightened risk of entering the child welfare system. The Mayor allocated \$5,789,229 in the FY2021 proposed budget, which includes one full-time employee (\$79,789) and one contract position to administer the programs (\$89,000). In FY2019, the GCP served 521 families and 822 children, and as of January 31, 2020, the GCP has served 524 families and 823 children.<sup>31</sup> According to CFSA’s Grandparent Caregiver Program Annual Status Report, 54 eligible families in FY2019 were denied the subsidy and placed on a waiting list due to a lack of appropriated funding.<sup>32</sup> CFSA explained that the waitlist is established to track interested families once the GCP budget is exhausted and new clients cannot be accepted.<sup>33</sup> Further, once on the waitlist, new clients may be enrolled as children age-out of the program, families fail to re-certify, or the GCP receives additional funding.<sup>34</sup>

Witnesses at the FY2021 Budget Oversight hearing shared concerns about a reduction in FY2021 funding for the GCP.<sup>35</sup> However, the \$32,000 decrease from FY2020 to FY2021 is in personnel services and will not affect the amount of available grant funds. While funding for grants has remained flat, there is a strong possibility CFSA will see an increased number of applications in the coming months. Additionally, when asked if there was a waitlist to enter the GCP, Director Donald stated, “we are at capacity.”<sup>36</sup> This public benefit for families experiencing economic hardship during the public health emergency could be necessary to cover additional costs associated with food, housing, clothes, and medication.

The Close Relative Caregiver Program (“CRCP”) is administered by CFSA and provides a monthly subsidy to eligible District of Columbia residents with low incomes who are raising their siblings, nieces, nephews, and cousins.<sup>37</sup> Relative caregivers use this monetary support to offset

<sup>29</sup> *Budget Oversight Hearing: Child and Family Services Agency*. May 26, 2020. Testimony of Brenda Donald, Director, Child and Family Services Agency.

<sup>30</sup> Grandparent Caregivers Program Fact Sheet.

<sup>31</sup> *2020 Performance Oversight Responses, Child and Family Services Agency, Q80*.

<sup>32</sup> Child and Family Services Agency, *Grandparent Caregivers’ Program: Annual Status Report CY2019*, February 28, 2020, p. 6, available at

[https://cfsa.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/cfsa/publication/attachments/CFSA\\_Grandparent%20Caregivers%20Program%20Annual%20Report%202019%20%28Final%29\\_2-11-20\\_1.pdf](https://cfsa.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/cfsa/publication/attachments/CFSA_Grandparent%20Caregivers%20Program%20Annual%20Report%202019%20%28Final%29_2-11-20_1.pdf).

<sup>33</sup> *Id.*

<sup>34</sup> *Id.*

<sup>35</sup> *Budget Oversight Hearing: Child and Family Services Agency*. May 22, 2020. Written testimonies of Judith Sandalow, Executive Director, Children’s Law Center and Marla Spindel, Executive Director, DC KinCare Alliance.

<sup>36</sup> *Budget Oversight Hearing: Child and Family Services Agency*. May 26, 2020. Testimony of Brenda Donald, Director, Child and Family Services Agency.

<sup>37</sup> *Close Relative Pilot Program*, April 8, 2020. Memorandum from Ann Reilly, Deputy Director for Programs Operations Child and Family Services Agency.

the costs of caring for relative children residing with them in the District who might otherwise end up in the foster care system.<sup>38</sup> The CRCP differs from the GCP in that it allows critical support for relative caregivers, who are not grandparents of the child, to be eligible for subsidy assistance. The CRCP funding has also remained flat from FY2020 at \$394,408, including one FTE (\$77,789).<sup>39</sup>

Through January 30, 2020, the CRCP has served 61 families.<sup>40</sup> At the Budget Oversight Hearing, Kymberly Holmes shared her positive experience with this program.<sup>41</sup> Ms. Holmes explained that she currently has custody of her 7 year-old niece and the CRCP funds allow her to properly care for her.<sup>42</sup> Director Donald explained that there remains sufficient funds in the FY2020 budget to support 45 additional families.<sup>43</sup> However, witnesses expressed concern that the funding for CRCP was not increased.<sup>44</sup> The Committee on Human Services is also concerned that if CFSA receives an increased number of applicants due to the public health emergency, current funding levels will not be adequate to accommodate all applicants in need in FY2021.

Child and Family Services Agency Prevention Services Grant Subtitle. In the “Fiscal Year 2020 Budget Support Act of 2019”,<sup>45</sup> the Committee introduced a subtitle entitled the Child and Family Services Agency Prevention Services Grant Act, requiring CFSA to dispense four competitive grants in FY2020 for programs that provide targeted upstream prevention services with the purposes of reducing abuse and neglect of the District’s youth. CFSA awarded the four grants as follows: (1) \$200,000 for Neighborhood Legal Services Program (“NLSP”), which assists with legal interventions through the *Family Preservation Project*; (2) \$150,000 for Mary’s Center for Maternal and Child Care Inc., which assists in building connections between fathers and their children through their Father Child Attachment Program; (3) \$150,000 for Fair Girls, which supports services for sex-trafficked youth that are not already in CFSA’s care; and (4) \$160,000 for Community Family Life Services, which provides support for home visitation to focus on mothers that are formerly homeless and/or returning citizens. These were one-time grants and were not renewed in the FY2021 proposed budget.

At the Budget Oversight Hearing, Leah Quaile Curran, Managing Attorney at NLSP, testified about how the *Family Preservation Project* works to prevent families from unnecessarily entering the child welfare system by providing targeted legal interventions in matters involving child custody, child support, domestic violence, landlord-tenant issues, housing conditions, federally

<sup>38</sup> Id.

<sup>39</sup> In 2019, the Council allocated \$500,000 to the CRCP to cover \$394,408 in subsidies and one FTE. In the FY2021 proposed budget, CFSA switched in a lower salaried FTE to administer this program resulting in a savings of about \$30,000. Those savings were not reinvested in CRCP subsidies.

<sup>40</sup> 2020 Performance Oversight Responses, Child and Family Services Agency, Q81.

<sup>41</sup> *Budget Oversight Hearing: Child and Family Services Agency*. May 26, 2020. Testimony of Kymberly Holmes, Public Witness.

<sup>42</sup> Id. (Ms. Holmes is recently unemployed due to COVID-19 and has not yet received unemployment payments; further, she is behind on her rent for her efficiency apartment she shares with her niece.)

<sup>43</sup> *Budget Oversight Hearing: Child and Family Services Agency*. May 26, 2020. Testimony of Brenda Donald, Director, Child and Family Services Agency.

<sup>44</sup> *Budget Oversight Hearing: Child and Family Services Agency*. May 22, 2020. Written testimonies of Judith Sandalow, Executive Director, Children’s Law Center and Marla Spindel, Executive Director, DC KinCare Alliance.

<sup>45</sup> September 11, 2019, D.C. Law 23-0016, 66 DCR 12631.

subsidized housing defense, and public benefits. <sup>46</sup> To date, this project has “provided critical legal assistance in over 550 matters involving child custody, child support, standby guardianship, domestic violence, landlord-tenant issues, housing conditions, federally subsidized housing defense \* \* \* and potentially changed the futures of over 936 children.”<sup>47</sup>

At the Budget Oversight Hearing, public witness Oscar Centeno testified about his positive experiences with Mary’s Center’s Father Child Attachment Program. Mr. Centeno stated “one of the greatest benefits of the home visiting fatherhood [program] – being able to work collaboratively, one-on-one, with another man who takes the time to understand the situation and problem solve to improve paternal-child relationships.<sup>48</sup> Within a month in the program, Mr. Centeno was able to better connect with his child and learned about the importance of spending time together.<sup>49</sup> It is clear that “these types of programs for fathers are of great benefit to our society.”<sup>50</sup> With the help of Mary’s Center, Mr. Centeno was able to also take part in the Home Visiting Program through Community Family Life Services as a staff member.<sup>51</sup> Public witness Kwame Willingham also shared his experience in taking part of the Mary’s Center Father Child Attachment Program.<sup>52</sup> Mr. Willingham found this program to be very helpful in that it gave him an “opportunity to understand how to engage [his] daughter in the home setting where the facilitator can come out and see the resources that [he] had and teach [him] how to use those resources to help [his] daughter grow and improve in a in a healthy way.”<sup>53</sup>

Christopher Spangler also testified about his positive experience with the Mary’s Center Father Child Attachment Program, offering a different perspective as a returning citizen.<sup>54</sup> Mr. Spangler was introduced to the Program four weeks prior to his release from a DC Central Detention Facility.<sup>55</sup> He shared that the “support and help from those team members from in the jail and even outside of the jail was incredible.”<sup>56</sup> Staff from the Program helped Mr. Spangler reconnect with his wife and four children, obtain food from Martha’s Table, secure employment, find an apartment, and secure resources for his mental health.<sup>57</sup>

Flex Funds. Judith Meltzer also testified that as a federally appointed court monitor, she believes that flex funds have largely contributed to fewer children entering foster care.<sup>58</sup> These funds assist

<sup>46</sup> *Budget Oversight Hearing: Child and Family Services Agency*. May 22, 2020. Testimony of Leah Quaile Curran, Managing Attorney, Neighborhood Legal Services Program.

<sup>47</sup> *Id.*

<sup>48</sup> *Budget Oversight Hearing: Child and Family Services Agency*. May 22, 2020. Written testimony of Oscar Centeno, Public Witness.

<sup>49</sup> *Id.*

<sup>50</sup> *Id.*

<sup>51</sup> *Id.*

<sup>52</sup> *Budget Oversight Hearing: Child and Family Services Agency*. May 22, 2020. Written testimony of Kwame Willingham, Public Witness.

<sup>53</sup> *Id.*

<sup>54</sup> *Budget Oversight Hearing: Child and Family Services Agency*. May 22, 2020. Oral testimony of Christopher Spangler, Public Witness.

<sup>55</sup> *Id.*

<sup>56</sup> *Id.*

<sup>57</sup> *Id.*

<sup>58</sup> *Budget Oversight Hearing: Child and Family Services Agency*. May 22, 2020. Written testimony of Judith Meltzer, Executive Vice President, Center for the Study of Social Policy.



families to meet essential needs, helping to stabilize children safely in their homes.<sup>59</sup> The FY2021 proposed budget shows a decrease of approximately \$200,000 in flex funds.

**Recommendations.** Testimony at the Budget Oversight Hearing highlighted the growing need and proven success of the GCP, the CRCP, Mary's Center's Father Child Attachment Program, NLSP's *Family Preservation Project* and the home visiting programs administered by Community Family Life Services and Fair Girls. Based on testimony from Director Donald, the Committee believes that there will be insufficient funding in the FY2021 proposed budget for the GCP and recommends that the Council find additional resources to assist more District grandparents, and their grandchildren in need. Although the CRCP has not yet hit capacity in FY2020, the Committee believes that the demand will start to outpace the investment in FY2021, and thus, could also require additional investment. The Committee also recommends that the Council find funds to restore Flex Funds to the FY2020 funding level. Finally, the Committee is aware that the FY2021 proposed budget does not include any funds to renew the four prevention microgrants awarded in FY2020. The Committee continues to see the efficacy of funding such programs and therefore, has allocated \$150,000 in one-time funds to renew a grant that provides support to a program that helps fathers gain knowledge and skills to improve their involvement and connection to their children through voluntary home visits; parenting support; child development information and activities. The Committee has also allocated \$200,000 in one-time funds to renew a grant that supports an existing program that provides parenting group sessions and home visitation services to families with a focus on supporting mothers who are homeless, victims of domestic violence, and who are reuniting with their children after returning home following a period of incarceration. Finally, the Committee will work with the rest of Council to find funding for the remaining two CFSA prevention microgrants.

**Placement:** In the FY2020 proposed budget, CFSA reduced funding for Child Placement by about \$4.2 million.<sup>60</sup> It was the second year in a row that CFSA reduced the budget for Child Placement and to justify the reduction, Director Donald explained that it was “based on efficiencies gained from full implementation of the Temporary Safe Haven Redesign, reducing private family-based placement providers from seven to two, and projecting savings based on the solicitation and award of new congregate care contracts during FY2020.”<sup>61</sup> Citing testimony from the Court Monitor<sup>62</sup> and the Children's Law Center<sup>63</sup>, the Committee expressed concern that despite child placement

<sup>59</sup> *Id.*

<sup>60</sup> The reduction was closer to \$6 million because CFSA increased the amount budgeted for Child Placement in the FY2019 revised budget by about \$1.89 million as compared to the FY2019 approved budget. In fact, it could be argued that the cut to core services under the Child Placement activity is even deeper because the activity is bolstered by a \$4.6 million enhancement for the build out of the District's Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System.

<sup>61</sup> *Budget Oversight Hearing: Child and Family Services Agency*. April 11, 2019. Testimony of Brenda Donald, Director, Child and Family Services Agency.

<sup>62</sup> *Budget Oversight Hearing: Child and Family Services Agency*. April 11, 2019. Written testimony of Judith Meltzer, Executive Vice President, Center for the Study of Social Policy (“CFSA and its primary partner, NCCF [(the “National Center for Children and Families”)] continue to struggle to have a comprehensive placement array that meets the needs of all children in care, including those children and youth who have specialized needs and require higher levels of care and support”).

<sup>63</sup> *Budget Oversight Hearing: Child and Family Services Agency*. April 11, 2019. Written testimony of Aubrey Edwards-Luce, Senior Policy Attorney, Children's Law Center (“the placement crisis is also leading to delayed

being described as an area of crisis, particularly with regard to the array of placements, CFSA decreased the budget.

At this year's performance oversight and budget oversight hearings, the term "crisis" continued to be used to describe the agency's placement array.<sup>64</sup> Judith Meltzer explained that "CFSA continues to struggle with having a sufficient placement array, resulting in some children sleeping overnight in the building and experiencing multiple moves from home to home."<sup>65</sup> She added that "[c]ritical to CFSA's ability to successfully exit from federal court-oversight is its ability to develop and maintain a comprehensive placement array that matches the needs of children and youth in their care."<sup>66</sup> The current public health emergency exacerbates the placement issue in a few ways: (1) it may become more challenging to find family members and fictive kin willing to take in youth because of concerns about health risks, which could lead to more youth entering care; (2) it may reduce the willingness of the already limited pool of resource parents and foster parents willing to accept new youth in their homes; and (3) Council's emergency legislation permitting youth turning 21 to extend their time in care three months beyond the public health emergency could place additional pressure on the system that was not budgeted for by the agency.<sup>67</sup> These concerns will likely be felt most acutely by older youth.

While the Committee remains focused on the placement array, we are pleased to see that for the first time in three years, CFSA increased the budget for Child Placement in FY2021 by \$3.5 million to about \$46 million.<sup>68</sup> This is even though they project having about 30 less kids in care. For the Committee, this demonstrates an important acknowledgment by CFSA that although they are reducing the number of youth in care, the needs of the youth coming into care are significant and complicated. However, given the Agency's success in narrowing the front door by continuing to invest in prevention, the Committee is making a minor reduction here to reinvest in prevention services. As we have in years past, the Committee will continue to track the number and array of available placements as well as the projections of the number of youth coming into care.

**COVID-19:** On March 11, 2020, Mayor Muriel Bowser declared a state of emergency and a public health emergency<sup>69</sup> in order to provide additional coordination for the District's response to the coronavirus (COVID-19). In observance of the Mayor's Stay at Home order, on March 16, 2020, DC Public Schools (DCPS) began participating in distance learning. CFSA relies on teachers to report abuse and neglect. CFSA collaborates with DCPS and DC Public Charter Schools (DCPCS) to raise students' awareness of the signs and risk factors of sexual exploitation.<sup>70</sup> "The Child Welfare Training Academy (CWTA) provides in-person training session to the District of

removals, children staying in poorly matched placements, or youth leaving their official placements for spaces that promise improved safety or better accommodations").

<sup>64</sup> *Budget Oversight Hearing: Child and Family Services Agency*. May 22, 2020. Written testimony of Judith Sandalow, Executive Director, Children's Law Center.

<sup>65</sup> *Budget Oversight Hearing: Child and Family Services Agency*. May 22, 2020. Written testimony of Judith Meltzer, Executive Vice President, Center for the Study of Social Policy.

<sup>66</sup> *Id.*

<sup>67</sup> DC Act 23-247 (2020).

<sup>68</sup> This comes close to restoring the funding to the level in FY2019 but is not close to the funding level in FY18, which was about \$61.8 million.

<sup>69</sup> Mayor's Order 2020-045: Declaration of Public Health Emergency - Coronavirus (COVID-19).

<sup>70</sup> 2020 Performance Oversight Responses, Child and Family Services Agency, Q42.

Columbia Public School System, Office of the State Superintendent of Education, Department of Human Services, Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services, and any other youth serving agency that requests training.”<sup>71</sup> Since the beginning of the pandemic, CFSA has seen a 62% drop in calls to their child abuse and neglect hotline.<sup>72</sup> However, the Washington Post reported in April that during the public health emergency, Children’s National Hospital has seen more severe child abuse cases than in prior years, with an increased number of children who have died from abuse during the pandemic, compared to the same time period last year.<sup>73</sup> “The American system of catching child abuse relies on kids venturing outside their homes. Year after year, most referrals to child protective services come from professionals — police officers, lawyers, doctors, anyone who comes into contact with a child as part of their job. But no group reports more than educators, who were responsible for 21 percent of the 4.3 million referrals made in 2018.”<sup>74</sup> As of June 13 of FY2020, CFSA reported that 45% of all hotline calls came from teachers and adults in an educational facility.<sup>75</sup>

Even with serious under-reporting of abuse and neglect, CFSA reports to currently have four trafficked youth in care.<sup>76</sup> At the Budget Oversight hearing, Tina Frundt, Founder and Director of Courtney’s House, testified that during the stay at home order, she and her team are currently at triple their capacity and are currently working with over 20 youth.<sup>77</sup> She stated that she and her team have traveled to Baltimore and Virginia many nights to rescue sex trafficked youth in the last several months.<sup>78</sup> Public witnesses “Linda” and “India” also shared their positive experience with receiving assistance from Courtney’s House as sex-trafficked youth in CFSA’s care.<sup>79</sup> In fact, one witness testified that “Courtney’s House should have housing for foster youth because they are the only one who understands.”<sup>80</sup> This testimony indicates that there are trafficked youth not currently counted. Despite the data provided by Ms. Frundt, CFSA does not anticipate having more trafficked youth come into its care in FY2021.<sup>81</sup>

### **3. FISCAL YEAR 2020-2025 CAPITAL BUDGET**

<sup>71</sup> *Id.*

<sup>72</sup> *Budget Oversight Hearing: Child and Family Services Agency*. May 26, 2020. Testimony of Brenda Donald, Director, Child and Family Services Agency.

<sup>73</sup> Samantha Schmidt & Hannah Natanson, *With Kids Stuck at Home, ER Doctors See More Severe Cases of Child Abuse*, The Washington Post, April 30, 2020, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/2020/04/30/child-abuse-reports-coronavirus/>; citing U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children’s Bureau. (2020). *Child Maltreatment 2018*. Available from <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/research-data-technology/statistics-research/child-maltreatment>.

<sup>74</sup> *Id.*

<sup>75</sup> Responses to Policy Questions from the Committee on Human Services, Child and Family Services Agency, June 12, 2020.

<sup>76</sup> CFSA Responses to Budget Engagement Forum Community Questions. May 21, 2020.

<sup>77</sup> *Budget Oversight Hearing: Child and Family Services Agency*. May 26, 2020. Testimony of Tina Frunt, Courtney’s House.

<sup>78</sup> *Id.*

<sup>79</sup> *Budget Oversight Hearing: Child and Family Services Agency*. May 26, 2020. Testimony of Linda and India, Public Witness.

<sup>80</sup> *Budget Oversight Hearing: Child and Family Services Agency*. May 26, 2020. Testimony of Michelle, Public Witness.

<sup>81</sup> *Budget Oversight Hearing: Child and Family Services Agency*. May 26, 2020. Testimony of Brenda Donald, Director, Child and Family Services Agency; (CFSA reports to receive an average of nine trafficked youth in care per year).

## Proposed Capital Budget Summary

Project No	Project Title	Allotment Scenario	Unspent Allotment (5-16-20)	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	6-year Total
RL31AC	CCWIS IMPLEMENTATION	Approved FY20 CIP for FY21-25	0	7,169,000	8,278,000	4,035,000	517,000	0	0	19,999,000
		Mayor's Proposed FY21 CIP Change	0	0	0	0	899,000	0	0	899,000
		Available Balances	3,475,177	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>RL31AC Total</b>			<b>3,475,177</b>	<b>7,169,000</b>	<b>8,278,000</b>	<b>4,035,000</b>	<b>1,416,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>20,898,000</b>
<b>Child and Family Services Total</b>			<b>3,475,177</b>	<b>7,169,000</b>	<b>8,278,000</b>	<b>4,035,000</b>	<b>1,416,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>20,898,000</b>

## Committee Analysis and Comments

The Committee supports the proposed increase of capital investment in the redesign of the District's Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System.

### 4. COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

#### a. Fiscal Year 2020 Operating Budget Recommendations

The Committee recommends **approval** of the Mayor's FY2021 proposed operating budget for the Child and Family Services Agency with the following changes:

Program	Activity	CSG	Comments	Frequency	FY2020 Recommendation	FY2021 Recommendation
2000 - AGENCY PROGRAMS	2066 - CHILD PLACEMENT	0050 - SUBSIDIES AND TRANSFERS	Recommended reduction in the Fiscal Year 2020 Revised Local Budget Emergency Act of 2020 to be recognized as one-time funds in Fiscal Year 2021.	One-Time	<b>\$ (100,000.00)</b>	
2000 - AGENCY PROGRAMS	2066 - CHILD PLACEMENT	0050 - SUBSIDIES AND TRANSFERS	Reduction in child placement to align the budget with projected spending in FY21.	Recurring		<b>\$ (500,000.00)</b>
3000 - COMMUNITY SERVICES	3092 - HEALTHY HORIZON'S CLINIC	0041 - CONTRACTUAL SERVICES - OTHER	Recommended reduction in the Fiscal Year 2020 Revised Local Budget Emergency Act of 2020 to be recognized as one-time funds in Fiscal Year 2021.	One-Time	<b>\$ (200,000.00)</b>	
6000 - POLICY AND PLANNING	6010 - POLICY	0011 - REGULAR PAY - CONT FULL TIME	Recommended reduction in the Fiscal Year 2020 Revised Local Budget Emergency Act of 2020 to be recognized as one-time funds in Fiscal Year 2021.	One-Time	<b>\$ (50,000.00)</b>	
6000 - POLICY AND PLANNING	6010 - POLICY	0014 - FRINGE BENEFITS - CURR PERSONNEL	Recommended reduction in the Fiscal Year 2020 Revised Local Budget Emergency Act of 2020 to be recognized as one-time funds in Fiscal Year 2021.	One-Time	<b>\$ (18,000.00)</b>	
8000 - COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS	8030 - PREVENTION SERVICES	0050 - SUBSIDIES AND TRANSFERS	Provide support to a program that helps fathers gain knowledge and skills to improve their involvement and connection to their children through voluntary home visits; parenting support; child development information and activities; health education and support; family goal planning; adult	One-Time		<b>\$150,000.00</b>

			literacy; legal advocacy; links to community resources; and activities and outings that promote bonding and healthy habits.			
8000 - COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS	8030 - PREVENTION SERVICES	0050 - SUBSIDIES AND TRANSFERS	Support an existing program that provides parenting group sessions and home visitation services to families with a focus on supporting mothers who are homeless, victims of domestic violence, and who are reuniting with their children after returning home	One-Time		\$160,000.00
			<b>LOCAL FUNDS TOTAL</b>		<b>\$(368,000.00)</b>	<b>\$(190,000.00)</b>

**b. Fiscal Year 2020-2025 Capital Budget Recommendations**

The Committee recommends approval of the FY2020-2025 capital budget for the Department of Human Services as proposed by the Mayor.

**c. Policy Recommendations**

4. Director Donald stated she believes that the FY2021 proposed budget is sufficient to support all necessary activities of the Agency. However, since the full impact of the pandemic is yet to be realized, CFSA must be prepared to quickly act should additional needs arise. While CFSA has taken proactive steps to create a respite center for youth whose caregiver's have fallen ill due to COVID-19, the policies and procedures for admitting and caring for children in this location have not been made public. While it is notable that CFSA seeks out alternative caregivers, including kin and fictive kin, before admitting children, CFSA should provide greater transparency about the respite centers as well as steps they take to divert youth from the child welfare system. Furthermore, The Committee encourages CFSA to increase recruiting efforts for resource parents to ensure there are placements available for youth coming into care, especially since there may be an uptick as a result of the public health emergency. CFSA should also make temporary emergency policy changes permanent. More specifically, officially abolishing the 6-month waiting period and the in-person registration requirement to enroll in the GCP and the CRCP. Finally, CFSA must prioritize leveraging all available federal resources, including *inter alia*, Family First dollars and various COVID relief funds.
5. CFSA should publicly share their official policy and procedure with oversight of suspected youth in danger of abuse and neglect during distance learning activities. Advocates and multiple public witnesses have shared a real concern that CFSA is not interacting with families that need support, especially during the public health emergency. While the District continues to slowly phase out of the Stay-at-Home order, CFSA must prepare to assist an increased number of youth at risk. CFSA should take steps to increase their visibility to youth that may be at risk of abuse or neglect through various strategies. For example, they could coordinate with DCPS and DCPCS to place a page in distance learning packets sharing a hotline number for youth to call for immediate assistance. Additionally, CFSA should work closely with Courtney's House and other advocacy groups assisting youth at-risk of being sex trafficked during the public health emergency.
6. As Director Donald explained, older youth and adolescents with trauma history require additional wrap around supports. One support that perhaps needs to be further addressed is

tutoring. For the 2018-2019 school year, CFSA had access to grade point averages (GPA) for 84 youth in grades 9-12 enrolled in DCPS and PGCPs schools. The range of GPAs included a low of 0 to a high of 4.42, with an average GPA of 1.69 and a median GPA of 1.61. CFSA should take a closer look into why grades are alarmingly low and what can be done to increase GPAs.

DRAFT

## C. DEPARTMENT ON DISABILITY SERVICES

### 1. AGENCY MISSION AND OVERVIEW

The mission of the Department on Disability Services (“DDS”) is to provide innovative, high-quality services that enable people with disabilities to lead meaningful and productive lives as vital members of their families, schools, workplaces, and communities in every neighborhood in the District of Columbia.

DDS is composed of two administrations that oversee and coordinate services for residents with disabilities through a network of private and not-for-profit providers. The Developmental Disabilities Administration (“DDA”) ensures that residents with intellectual disabilities receive the services and supports they need to lead self-determined and valued lives in the community. DDA achieves this through the delivery of outreach and service coordination services; the development and management of a provider network delivering community residential, day, vocational, employment, and individual and family support services; and the operation of a comprehensive quality management program.

The Rehabilitation Services Administration (“RSA”) delivers vocational rehabilitation services focusing on employment and training activities that allow persons with disabilities to experience a greater quality of life by obtaining and sustaining employment, economic self-sufficiency, and independence. RSA provides employment marketing and placement services, vocational rehabilitation, inclusive business enterprises, and support for the D.C. Center for Independent Living. DDS also serves as the state agency for Social Security Disability Insurance determinations under the direction of the Social Security Administration.

DDS operates through the following 5 divisions:

**Developmental Disabilities Administration (“DDA”)** – provides individualized services, supports, and life planning to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities so that they may lead self-determined and valued lives in the community.

This division contains the following 3 activities:

- **DDA Service Planning and Coordination** – provides services to qualified individuals by coordinating available resources and opportunities in the community through the development of Individual Service Plans (“ISPs”), advocating for quality services to promote healthy and productive lifestyles for each person, completing monitoring activities to ensure the delivery of services and supports, completing all intake activities for new applicants, and coordinating activities carried out in D.C. Superior Court;
- **Quality Assurance** – examines and improves internal and external service delivery systems by conducting external provider reviews to ensure performance so that standards, federal and local regulations, quality frameworks issued by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (“CMS”), national best practices, and court mandates are met. Quality

Assurance also includes functional responsibility for incident management and enforcement, rights and advocacy, CMS and *Evans*<sup>82</sup> performance analysis, and reporting and mortality review; and

- **DDA Consumer Resources and Operations** – manages the human care provider network and administrative functions for DDA including budget compliance, service and billing authorization, and residential portfolio management; operates the Home and Community Based Services Waiver including provider enrollment, provision of technical assistance, and service authorization; and manages benefits and personal funds.

**Rehabilitation Services** – assists persons with physical, cognitive, and emotional disabilities to achieve a greater quality of life by obtaining and sustaining employment, economic self-sufficiency, and independence.

This division contains the following 4 activities:

- **RSA Vocational Rehabilitation Services** – assesses, plans, develops, and provides vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities to enable them to prepare for, maintain, and advance in integrated, competitive employment; and provides services to businesses, including recruitment and job placement for people with disabilities and training for employers on issues related to hiring and maintaining employees with disabilities;
- **RSA Blind and Visual Impairment Services** – provides services to people with disabilities to help them live as independently as possible in the community. Services include advocacy, independent living skills training, information and referral, peer support, and transition from secondary school to post-secondary activities and from nursing homes;
- **Quality Assurance** – provides monitoring and compliance reviews of internal and external operations and agencies, ensuring that RSA customers received quality services that meet local and federal regulations; and
- **RSA Operations** – manages the human care provider network that serves RSA clients, provides oversight to the Randolph Sheppard Vending Facility Program, and processes payments for service providers.

**Disability Determination Services** – administers Social Security Disability Insurance and Supplemental Security Income eligibility determinations in conjunction with the federal Social Security Administration.

**Agency Management** – provides for administrative support and the required tools to achieve operational and programmatic results. This division is standard for all agencies using performance-based budgeting.

<sup>82</sup> *Evans v. Washington*, 459 F. Supp. 483, 484, 486 (D. D.C., 1978).



**Agency Financial Operations** – provides comprehensive and efficient financial management services to, and on behalf of, District agencies so that the financial integrity of the District of Columbia is maintained. This division is standard for all agencies using performance-based budgeting.

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## 2. FISCAL YEAR 2021 OPERATING BUDGET

### Proposed Operating Budget Summary

Fund Type	FY2019 Actual	FY2020 Approved	Mayor's FY 2021 Proposed	Committee Variance	Committee Approved	Percent Change
LOCAL FUND	\$123,037,128	\$138,251,105	\$131,048,076		\$131,048,076	-5.2%
FEDERAL GRANT FUND	\$29,514,362	\$31,879,590	\$33,233,191		\$33,233,191	4.2%
FEDERAL MEDICAID PAYMENTS	\$14,017,436	\$12,500,621	\$14,513,225		\$14,513,225	16.1%
SPECIAL PURPOSE REVENUE FUNDS ('O' TYPE)	\$12,504,195	\$7,710,291	\$14,754,614		\$14,754,614	91.4%
OPERATING INTRA-DISTRICT FUNDS	\$307,806	\$49,677	\$0		\$0	-100.0%
<b>TOTAL GROSS FUNDS</b>	<b>\$179,380,927</b>	<b>\$190,391,284</b>	<b>\$193,549,107</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$193,549,107</b>	<b>1.7%</b>

Comptroller Source Group	FY 2019 Actuals	FY 2020 Approved	Mayor's FY 2021 Proposed	Committee Variance	Committee Approved	Percent Change
11-REGULAR PAY - CONT FULL TIME	\$32,450,215	\$36,522,426	\$36,364,025		\$36,364,025	-0.4%
12-REGULAR PAY - OTHER	\$752,949	\$1,272,073	\$920,980		\$920,980	-27.6%
13-ADDITIONAL GROSS PAY	\$222,153	\$47,240	\$47,240		\$47,240	0.0%
14-FRINGE BENEFITS - CURR PERSONNEL	\$7,836,328	\$9,108,474	\$8,979,880		\$8,979,880	-1.4%
15-OVERTIME PAY	\$466,299	\$120,100	\$120,100		\$120,100	0.0%
20-SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS	\$97,039	\$113,000	\$113,000		\$113,000	0.0%
30-ENERGY, COMM. AND BLDG RENTALS	\$1,851	\$6,529	\$4,319		\$4,319	-33.9%
31-TELECOMMUNICATIONS	\$362,154	\$374,078	\$351,120		\$351,120	-6.1%
32-RENTALS - LAND AND STRUCTURES	\$5,071,503	\$5,344,873	\$5,249,647		\$5,249,647	-1.8%
34-SECURITY SERVICES	\$230,394	\$233,843	\$337,449		\$337,449	44.3%
35-OCCUPANCY FIXED COSTS	\$9,122	\$139,152	\$73,544		\$73,544	-47.1%
40-OTHER SERVICES AND CHARGES	\$6,404,878	\$5,234,467	\$5,807,995		\$5,807,995	11.0%
41-CONTRACTUAL SERVICES - OTHER	\$2,201,598	\$2,148,497	\$2,145,520		\$2,145,520	-0.1%
50-SUBSIDIES AND TRANSFERS	\$123,130,716	\$129,474,025	\$132,778,595		\$132,778,595	2.6%
70-EQUIPMENT & EQUIPMENT RENTAL	\$143,728	\$252,507	\$255,694		\$255,694	1.3%
<b>TOTAL GROSS FUNDS</b>	<b>\$179,380,927</b>	<b>\$190,391,284</b>	<b>\$193,549,107</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$193,549,107</b>	<b>1.7%</b>

Program	FY2019 Actual	FY2020 Approved	Mayor's FY 2021 Proposed	Committee Variance	Committee Approved	Percent Change
0100 - AGENCY FINANCIAL OPERATIONS PROGRAM	\$1,663,617	\$1,909,040	\$1,833,014		\$1,833,014	-4.0%
1000 - AGENCY MANAGEMENT	\$15,149,166	\$15,568,274	\$15,032,096		\$15,032,096	-3.4%
6000 - DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES ADMIN	\$130,398,887	\$138,498,727	\$141,971,106		\$141,971,106	2.5%
7000 - REHABILITATION SERVICES	\$21,351,689	\$21,918,153	\$21,671,738		\$21,671,738	-1.1%
8000 - DISABILITY DETERMINATION DIVISION	\$10,817,567	\$12,497,089	\$13,041,153		\$13,041,153	4.4%
<b>TOTAL GROSS FUNDS</b>	<b>\$179,380,927</b>	<b>\$190,391,284</b>	<b>\$193,549,107</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$193,549,107</b>	<b>1.7%</b>

## Committee Analysis and Comments

***Wage Increases for Direct Support Professionals:*** In 2018, the Committee on Human Services (“Committee”) convened a working group to address the looming shortage of direct-support professionals in the disability services field, and the workforce recruitment challenges associated with this shortage. The working group considered how the District can attract employees to this field, how the District is training the existing potential workforce of unemployed DC residents to prepare them for available jobs, and how the District can replace an aging population of workers as they move into retirement.

DDS, along with the Department of Employment Services (“DOES”), the Department of Health Care Finance (“DHCF”), the University of the District of Columbia (“UDC”), the D.C. Coalition of Disabilities Services Providers, and the Offices of Councilmembers Grosso and Silverman were a part of the working group. The working group met three times. The first session focused on identifying and understanding the issues. In the second session, the working group discussed what steps need to be taken to address the issues. In the final session, potential solutions were discussed, including the idea of legislation to address workforce recruitment challenges.

During the working group, DDS, DOES, and UDC became aware of the fact that both UDC and the District had certification programs for direct support professionals. As a result of the working group, these entities were able to coordinate their programming and streamline the certification process. Additionally, UDC’s certification program now accounts for the best practices recommendations DDS adheres to for direct support professional trainings and certifications.

The working group also produced the “Direct Support Professionals Payment Rate Act of 2018”.<sup>83</sup> This legislation provided for an annual payment to certain providers of direct supports to persons with developmental disabilities. This payment would raise the amount direct support professionals are compensated to 125% of the District’s minimum wage, thereby making the job of a direct support professional more competitive and in-demand when compared to other minimum wage jobs. The Director of DHCF is charged with considering certain factors in recommending the amount of the payment. This legislation was introduced on November 13, 2018, and was referred to the Committee on Health, with comments from this Committee. No hearing was scheduled before Council Period 22 expired.

The Committee reintroduced the legislation on March 20, 2019, as the “Direct Support Professional Payment Rate Act of 2019”.<sup>84</sup> The legislation was sequentially referred to this Committee and the Committee on Health. A joint public hearing was held on June 13, 2019. This Committee voted to approve a committee report and print on November 20, 2019, and the Committee on Health did the same on December 5, 2019. The introduced legislation required the average amount to be paid to each service provider to equal 125% of the greater of either the District living wage or the District minimum wage. The committee print changed the percentage from 125% to 117.6%. This change was based on estimates that around 30% of the DSP workforce

<sup>83</sup> Direct Support Professionals Payment Rate Act of 2018, B22-1035, Council Period 22 (2018).

<sup>84</sup> Direct Support Professional Payment Rate Act of 2019, B23-0214, Council Period 23 (2019).

will be paid about 110% of the District's minimum wage, 30% of the DSP workforce would be paid about 115%, and 40% of the DSP workforce would be paid about 125%. The legislation was unanimously approved by Council on first reading on January 7, 2020, and final reading on February 4, 2020.

The legislation was transmitted to the Mayor on February 14, 2020, and enacted without the Mayor's signature on March 3, 2020. The Mayor did not fund the legislation in the FY2021 proposed budget. Instead, the FY2021 proposed budget provides two streams of funding to address the workforce shortage. First, the Mayor proposes a subtitle to the Budget Support Act named the "Stevie Sellows Direct Support Professional Quality Improvements Amendment Act of 2020". This subtitle increases assessment on the disability service providers by a half percent and uses that revenue and Medicaid match to raise a total of \$2.6 million for FY2021 for the payment of DSP workers at intermediate care facilities. Second, the FY2021 proposed budget includes a \$1.4 million grant program to fund the payment of DSPs workers employed by Medicaid Waiver providers.

While the Committee believes funding the "Direct Support Professional Payment Rate Act of 2019" is the best method to address the workforce shortage faced by disability service providers, it is also supportive of the Mayor's efforts to address the issue through the Stevie Sellows Fund and the proposed grant program. These funding mechanisms will allow for the necessary payment rate increases to DSP workers at intermediate care facilities. However, an additional \$2 million investment is necessary to create the desired payment rate increases for DSP workers employed by Medicaid Waiver providers. This remains a priority for the Committee, and it will work with the Executive and the Council to request that these gaps are filled.

***Implementation of Bill 22-154 – Disability Services Reform Amendment Act of 2018:*** Bill 22-154 was initially introduced as the "Citizens with Intellectual Disabilities Civil Rights Restoration Act of 2017"<sup>85</sup> on March 3, 2017. It was introduced by Chairman Mendelson at the request of the Mayor. Chairman Mendelson referred the bill to the Committee on Human Services for consideration on March 7, 2017. The Council passed the "Disability Services Reform Amendment Act of 2018" on February 6, 2018. The Mayor signed the bill, which was then transmitted to the U.S. Congress and became effective on May 5, 2018 as D.C. Law 22-93.

The purpose of D.C. Law 22-93 is to maximize the decision-making abilities of persons with intellectual disabilities in the District, and to create a formal complaint process for recipients of DDS services.<sup>86</sup> The law does three things: (1) it terminates the process of civil commitment; (2) it establishes a supported decision-making credential; and (3) it creates a suitable formal complaints process for recipients of DDS services.

The law required DDS to take several steps to come into conformance. First, DDS was required to issue rules to implement the establishment of a formal complaints procedure. The Committee urged DDS to issue these rules as soon as possible, and within the 45-day timeline recommended

<sup>85</sup> Disability Services Reform Amendment Act of 2018, B22-0154, Council Period 22 (2018).

<sup>86</sup> Council of the District of Columbia. Committee on Human Services, *Disability Services Reform Amendment Act of 2018* Committee Report (Dec. 12, 2017).

by the law. DDS issued the rules for the formal complaints procedure, and on January 1, 2020, DDS launched the DDA Formal Complaint System.

Second, DDS was required to recognize supported decision-making agreements, and issue rules as necessary. The law outlines the required form of a supported decision-making agreement. DDS now honors supported decision-making agreements, including for the following procedures and services: intake and eligibility; individual support plans; protection, use and release of personal information; and services and authorizations. DDS makes available an “Information and Instructions” packet for use with the law’s new form.<sup>87</sup> The Committee commends DDS’s full implementation of the Disability Services Reform Amendment Act of 2018.

***Developmental Disabilities Administration (“DDA”) Health Initiative Program:*** In July 2019, the Committee learned of DDS’s decision to end its relationship with the Georgetown University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (“UCEDD”) in its capacity as the service provider for the DDA Health Initiative (“DDAHI”) program. Under the DDAHI, the Georgetown UCEDD provided seven distinct services: (1) the development of developmental disability nursing standards; (2) consultations for people with complex medical needs; (3) health education and promotion that increases access to relevant resources; (4) training sessions to community-based providers on the essentials of trauma informed care; (5) parent education for people with intellectual disabilities; (6) specialized training to help develop healthcare structures for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities; and (7) evaluation studies that provides focused analyses to help guide policy.

Immediately after the decision to discontinue the relationship between DDS and Georgetown became public, the Committee received an outpouring of emails and phone calls from advocates, families, and members of the disability rights community expressing their concerns. In response, the Committee held a Joint Public Roundtable with the Committee of the Whole on July 23, 2019. At the hearing, many advocates expressed a belief that the decision to discontinue the relationship was the incorrect one, and that DDS must reconsider this decision. Advocates cited a letter, addressed to the Mayor and Chairman Mendelson, from the former Directors and Deputy Directors of disability services agencies of nine states, expressing the importance of the Georgetown program to stabilizing the District’s disability services after *Evans*.<sup>88</sup> *Evans v. Washington* is a 1976 court decision that put the District’s care for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities into court supervision until 2017. The advocates also stated that if a discontinuation of a relationship with Georgetown for the provision of these services is inevitable, the transition must be smooth and leave no gaps in services.

On July 24, the Committee sent a letter to the DDS Director asking DDS to provide a weekly status update, for 8 weeks, on the transition of each person receiving services from the DDAHI. DDS provided status updates for the requested time period. At the Committee’s Budget Oversight Hearing, the DDS Director shared that the cost of the DDAHI contract with the Georgetown UCEDD was \$1.3 million. He also shared that the anticipated FY2021 cost of the same services,

<sup>87</sup> *DDS Decision Making Rights for People with Disabilities*, Department on Disability Services, <https://dds.dc.gov/page/dds-decision-making-rights-people-disabilities>.

<sup>88</sup> *Evans v. Washington*, 459 F. Supp. 483, 484, 486 (D. D.C., 1978).

after it was brought within the agency, would be \$770,000. The Committee will continue to work with the agency and the advocacy community to ensure that DDS service recipients receive the same quality of services from DDAHI in its new framework, as they did when the program was administered by the Georgetown UCEDD.

***Expansion of DDS - Developmental Disability Administration (“DDA”) Services:*** At DDS’s budget oversight hearing, several public witnesses testified about the need for the agency to expand its services to include people with developmental disabilities who do not have an intellectual disability. Advocates expressed that eligibility standards should be broadened to serve those with significant unmet needs who fall outside of the current IQ requirement. They have stated that people who score above DDS’s IQ requirement may suffer from developmental disabilities that require services from DDS, just as well as those fall within the requirement. The advocates argue that the agency should work to identify the needs of, and provide support to, people with developmental disabilities that do not fit the IQ requirement. This may include people with autism.

The Committee believes it is important that the District works toward providing every individual with the supports and services needed to live a happy and fulfilled life. The possibility of gaps in the District’s services for people with developmental disabilities who do not have an intellectual disability is something that must be addressed. DDS has held the position that the governing statute does not allow for an expansion of eligibility. Nonetheless, the Committee believes it is vital that the agency consider the expansion of eligibility, so that all people with developmental disabilities can receive the supports they need to live full and independent lives in the District.

The Committee plans on continuing this conversation with the agency and relevant stakeholders. The Committee will seek to understand what steps needs to be taken, and obstacles are in place, for DDA to expand its eligibility requirements to include people with developmental disabilities who do not have an intellectual disability. If necessary and deemed appropriate, this may include legislative action.

### **3. FISCAL YEAR 2021-2025 CAPITAL BUDGET**

The Mayor has no proposed FY2021 – FY2026 capital budget for the Department on Disability Services.

### **4. COMMITTEE BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **a. Fiscal Year 2021 Operating Budget Recommendations**

The Committee recommends **approval** of the FY2021 operating budget for the Department on Disability Services as proposed by the Mayor.

#### **b. Policy Recommendations**

2. The FY2021 proposed budget addresses workforce shortages faced by disability service providers by making some investments in order to pay direct support professionals a more competitive wage. However, it does not go far enough. DDS must work with DHCF to

consider creative solutions to make up the difference in the revenue streams wage increases for direct support professionals in the FY2021 proposed budget, and the funding necessary for providers to pay more competitive wages to DSPs. The Committee recommends filling this gap by partially funding the “Disability Service Provider Payment Rate Act of 2019”.

3. At the 2020 Performance Oversight Hearing for DDS, and the Committee Budget Hearing, public witnesses expressed the need for DDS to expand its services to include people with developmental disabilities who do not have an intellectual disability. The Committee plans on hosting a working group with members of the disability services community to better understand the needs, the costs, and best next steps. The Committee will invite DDS to participate in the working group and hopes the agency will engage in conversations about what it means to expand eligibility.
4. DDS has taken several steps in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, and the subsequent public health emergency. These steps include hiring quality resource specialists, hiring nurses with Covid-19 training, working with the District of Columbia Department of health and the Public Health Lab on to provide guidance to providers on Covid-19-related matters, and creating an avenue for providers to share mitigation strategies. Additionally, DDS has made itself available on weekly calls with providers to answer questions and provide guidance. DDS is now publicly posting Covid-19 testing data of its service recipients online. The Committee encourages DDS to continue these efforts, and remain in communication with the Committee as procedures changes and the District enters different phases of the ReOpen DC.

## B. DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

### 1. AGENCY MISSION AND OVERVIEW

The mission of the Department of Human Services (DHS) is to empower every District resident to reach their full potential by providing meaningful connections to work opportunities, economic assistance, and supportive services. DHS operates through the following 4 divisions:

**Economic Security Administration (ESA)** – determines and maintains eligibility and the amount of assistance for cash, food, child care, and medical benefits. ESA also, through a Two Generational approach, administers the those receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP), Employment and Training (SNAP E&T) programs, which provide employment and training-related activities designed to improve long-term employability and achieve sustaining income. ESA also administers the Burial Assistance program, Interim Disability Assistance, and General Children’s Assistance.

This division contains the following 11 activities:

- **Burial Assistance** – provides assistance to low-income families who need help with funeral expenses;
- **General Assistance for Children** – provides financial assistance to eligible individuals caring for unrelated children under the age of 18;
- **Interim Disability Assistance (IDA)** – provides temporary financial assistance to those who are unable to work due to a disability and who have a high probability of receiving federal Supplemental Security Income (SSI). IDA payments are issued until SSI eligibility is approved or denied, after which the IDA payment ends;
- **Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)** – provides financial assistance to eligible families individuals with children under the age of 19, so that they can meet their basic needs, while supporting entire family through a Two Generational approach in providing supportive services aimed at building and transition to economic self-sufficiency;
- **Cash Assistance (TANF)** – provides financial assistance to eligible individuals with children under the age of 19, so that they can meet their basic needs and transition to economic self-sufficiency;
- **Job Opportunity and Training (TANF)** – provides employment readiness, job placement, coordination and skill development training, and educational enrichment to eligible individuals so that they can be socially and economically self-reliant;
- **Supplemental Food Assistance (Local)** – provides locally funded food assistance to the District’s Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients. This assistance



is provided to District residents who receive the minimum SNAP benefits to increase the food supplement to \$30 per month;

- **Case Management** – provides diagnostic, evaluation, and plan development services to consumers in order to determine the needs and plan the treatment and other related services and supports needed. Coordinates treatment and services to remediate barriers to employment and assists with securing other financial supports, such as Program on Work Employment and Responsibility (POWER) and SSI. This activity includes the Office of Work Opportunity and the Food Stamp Employment and Training Programs;
- **Eligibility Determination Services** – provides program eligibility determination services to individuals of the District of Columbia for services for which they qualify;
- **Monitoring and Quality Assurance** – provides internal monitoring of ESA’s compliance with federal and District laws and court orders; identifies, investigates, and reports customer fraud in obtaining assistance; and addresses the accurate and timely determination of eligibility and administration of benefits; and
- **Early Education Subsidy Transfer** – provides funding to the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) for subsidized child care for the children of TANF-eligible families.

**Family Services Administration (FSA)** – helps homeless individuals and families, low-income people, adults at-risk for abuse or neglect, teenage parents, troubled families, and refugees to become gradually stable and fully self-sufficient through an array of social services and assessments; and provides case-management and crisis-intervention services.

This division contains the following 21 activities:

- **Homeless Prevention** – This activity includes programs for families, individuals and youth experiencing an imminent risk of homelessness that provide stabilizing services and resources aimed at preventing housing loss. Services offered may include diversion and mediation services, case management and/or care coordination, referrals to partners, rental assistance and other limited financial assistance;
- **Emergency Rental Housing** – The Emergency Rental Assistance program helps low-income District residents who are facing housing emergencies, or at imminent risk for homelessness. A housing emergency is when immediate action is needed to avoid homelessness, to re-establish a home, or to prevent eviction from a home;
- **Domestic Violence Services** – provides protection, emergency shelter, and crisis intervention services to victims of domestic violence so that they can seek immediate relief from harm;

- **Transitional Housing Youth** – provides transitional housing and case management supports for up to 24 months for youth ages eighteen to twenty-four who are experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness;
- **Youth Services** – provides integrated services for vulnerable at-risk youth through programs listed below. In addition to case management and crisis intervention, youth programs have the authority to travel with participants for enrichment opportunities.
  1. **Alternatives to the Court Experience (ACE)** – the sole youth diversion program in Washington, DC, ACE offers individually tailored and clinically appropriate services to youth up to 17 years old and families as alternatives to arrest and prosecution. ACE’s goal is to reduce recidivism, reengage youths in school, and improve overall youth functioning;
  2. **Parent and Adolescent Support Services (PASS)** –works with youth up to the age of 17 years old who have committed status offense (mainly truancy) by conducting comprehensive youth assessments and providing intensive case management and linkages to other supportive services;
  3. **Teen Parent Assessment Program (TPAP)** – vides case management and support services to teen parents age 17 and under who receive TANF or self-refer to the program. TPAP’s goal is to move program participants towards self-sufficiency through completion of their high school or GED program; and
  4. **Strengthening Teens Enriching Parents (STEP)** – works with youth up to 17 years old who are reported missing to the police. Case managers provide outreach to assess why the youth has left home and together with the family, implement services with community partners – particularly Sasha Bruce – and other District agencies to reduce the likelihood of future missing persons reports, and increase family stability;
- **Homeless Services Continuum - Youth** – Provides emergency and ongoing housing support and services, including street outreach and drop-in services, to help youth who are experiencing homelessness or at risk of experiencing homelessness transition into or maintain permanent affordable housing;
- **Permanent Supportive Housing -Youth** – the Extended Transitional Housing program (ETH) provides housing support and wrap-around services to youth with a high level of need that require long-term housing supports and intensive case management and other services;
- **Transitional Age Youth Shelter** – provides emergency housing and supportive services to youth ages eighteen to twenty-four experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness;
- **Rapid Rehousing - Youth** – provides access to permanent housing with the use of temporary financial supports and case management assistance for up to 12 months;

- **Rapid Rehousing - Individuals** – the Rapid Re-housing for Individuals Program provides access to permanent housing with the use of temporary financial supports and case management assistance for up to 12 months;
- **Rapid Rehousing - Families** – the Family Rehousing and Stabilization Program (FRSP) supports District residents who are experiencing homelessness or at imminent risk of experiencing homelessness to achieve stability in permanent housing through individualized and time-limited assistance. FRSP offers a wide range of supports that are responsive to participant needs including: individualized case management services, housing identification, connection to mainstream and community-based resources and financial assistance;
- **Permanent Supportive Housing - General** – the Shelter Plus Care program is a HUD federally funded housing voucher program that provides long-term rental assistance to chronically homeless individuals and families;
- **Permanent Supportive Housing - Individuals** – the Permanent Supportive Housing program provides long-term permanent housing to eligible chronically homeless individuals at imminent risk of becoming homeless and need intensive case management. Eligibility is based on VI-SPDAT Assessment or Full SPDAT Assessment score with PSH recommendation;
- **Permanent Supportive Housing - Families** – the Permanent Supportive Housing program provides long-term permanent housing to eligible chronically homeless families who are at risk of becoming homeless and need intensive case management. Eligibility is based on VI-SPDAT Assessment or Full SPDAT Assessment score with PSH recommendation;
- **Homeless Services Continuum - Families** – services include intake at the Virginia Williams Family Resource Center, crisis intervention and prevention, emergency and temporary shelter, transitional housing, rapid rehousing, and permanent supportive housing to families in the District of Columbia who are homeless or at risk of homelessness;
- **Homeless Services Continuum - Individuals** – services include outreach and coordinated entry, crisis intervention and prevention, services targeted to veterans, day center, low barrier shelter, temporary shelter, transitional housing, rapid rehousing, and permanent supportive housing to individuals in the District of Columbia who are homeless or at risk of homelessness;
- **Homeless Services Continuum - General** – provides security, food, management, emergency rental assistance, housing navigation, fixed costs (for shelter and housing facilities), supplies, equipment, and administrative support for the activities listed under the Homeless Continuum;

- **Refugee Resettlement** – provides social services, cash, and medical assistance to eligible refugees and their families through sub-grant arrangements with community-based non-profit agencies;
- **Strong Families** – provides comprehensive service delivery through case management and support services to families who are experiencing significant social, emotional, or other crises in order to de-escalate and help stabilize the family;
- **Community Services Block Grant** – provides assistance to low-income residents through a network of community action agencies and other neighborhood-based organizations in order to reduce poverty, revitalize low-income communities, and empower low-income families and individuals to become self-reliant; and
- **Subsidy Transfer** – provides child care benefits for low-income families.

**Agency Management/Office of the Director** – provides executive management, policy direction, strategic and financial planning, human capital management, information technology, capital programs, legislative and community relations, and performance management. The Office of Program Review, Monitoring, and Investigation includes agency risk management, fraud investigation, internal affairs, homeless shelter monitoring, and a quality control division.

**Agency Financial Operations** – provides comprehensive and efficient financial management services to, and on behalf of, District agencies so that the financial integrity of the District of Columbia is maintained. This division is standard for all agencies using performance-based budgeting.

### **Division Structure Change**

The Department on Human Services has no division structure changes in the FY2021 proposed budget. However, the Adult Protective Services program was transferred out of DHS to the Department of Aging and Community Living.

## 2. FISCAL YEAR 2021 OPERATING BUDGET

### Proposed Operating Budget Summary

Fund Type	FY2019 Actual	FY2020 Approved	Mayor's FY 2021 Proposed	Committee Variance	Committee Approved	Percent Change
LOCAL FUND	\$375,404,211	\$400,123,942	\$406,032,284	\$860,218	\$406,892,502	1.7%
FEDERAL GRANT FUND	\$173,141,122	\$168,822,124	\$169,294,054		\$169,294,054	0.3%
FEDERAL MEDICAID PAYMENTS	\$13,652,605	\$17,423,455	\$16,561,911		\$16,561,911	-4.9%
SPECIAL PURPOSE REVENUE FUNDS ('O'TYPE)	(\$626,588)	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000		\$1,000,000	0.0%
OPERATING INTRA-DISTRICT FUNDS	\$2,681,448	\$2,956,827	\$3,364,439		\$3,364,439	13.8%
<b>TOTAL GROSS FUNDS</b>	<b>\$564,252,797</b>	<b>\$590,326,349</b>	<b>\$596,252,688</b>	<b>\$860,218</b>	<b>\$597,112,905</b>	<b>1.1%</b>

Comptroller Source Group	FY 2019 Actuals	FY 2020 Approved	Mayor's FY 2021 Proposed	Committee Variance	Committee Approved	Percent Change
11-REGULAR PAY - CONT FULL TIME	\$79,762,290	\$79,512,738	\$101,545,608	(\$286,055)	\$101,259,553	27.4%
12-REGULAR PAY - OTHER	\$4,848,657	\$22,927,376	\$1,127,119		\$1,127,119	-95.1%
13-ADDITIONAL GROSS PAY	\$1,508,112	\$5,000	\$20,785		\$20,785	315.7%
14-FRINGE BENEFITS - CURR PERSONNEL	\$21,092,741	\$25,749,717	\$25,526,255	(\$73,381)	\$25,452,874	-1.2%
15-OVERTIME PAY	\$3,330,539	\$13,420	\$781		\$781	-94.2%
20-SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS	\$542,598	\$620,490	\$513,392		\$513,392	-17.3%
30-ENERGY, COMM. AND BLDG RENTALS	\$768,193	\$719,060	\$2,575,553		\$2,575,553	258.2%
31-TELECOMMUNICATIONS	\$1,620,918	\$1,665,376	\$1,728,410		\$1,728,410	3.8%
32-RENTALS - LAND AND STRUCTURES	\$19,893,246	\$19,613,173	\$24,882,412		\$24,882,412	26.9%
34-SECURITY SERVICES	\$3,441,755	\$3,685,912	\$5,008,481		\$5,008,481	35.9%
35-OCCUPANCY FIXED COSTS	\$2,006,290	\$2,371,212	\$7,044,262		\$7,044,262	197.1%
40-OTHER SERVICES AND CHARGES	\$4,492,250	\$4,425,738	\$5,210,655		\$5,210,655	17.7%
41-CONTRACTUAL SERVICES - OTHER	\$9,711,463	\$11,368,400	\$12,082,199		\$12,082,199	6.3%
50-SUBSIDIES AND TRANSFERS	\$409,577,880	\$416,836,573	\$408,425,260	\$1,219,654	\$409,644,914	-1.7%
70-EQUIPMENT & EQUIPMENT RENTAL	\$1,655,866	\$812,164	\$561,515		\$561,515	-30.9%
<b>TOTAL GROSS FUNDS</b>	<b>\$564,252,797</b>	<b>\$590,326,349</b>	<b>\$596,252,688</b>	<b>\$860,218</b>	<b>\$597,112,905</b>	<b>1.1%</b>

Program	FY2019 Actual	FY2020 Approved	Mayor's FY 2021 Proposed	Committee Variance	Committee Approved	Percent Change
0100 - AGENCY FINANCIAL OPERATIONS	\$3,156,767	\$3,585,134	\$3,392,229		\$3,392,229	-5.4%
1000 - AGENCY MANAGEMENT	\$30,526,559	\$33,827,335	\$35,712,481		\$35,712,481	5.6%
2000 - ECONOMIC SECURITY ADMINISTRATION	\$266,948,866	\$261,775,329	\$270,502,157	(\$213,519)	\$270,288,638	3.3%
5000 - FAMILY SERVICES	\$265,190,438	\$291,138,550	\$286,645,820	\$1,073,737	\$287,719,557	-1.2%
5100 - TARGETED SERVICES PROGRAM	(\$1,569,601)	\$0	\$0		\$0	0.0%
<b>TOTAL GROSS FUNDS</b>	<b>\$564,253,029</b>	<b>\$590,326,349</b>	<b>\$596,252,688</b>	<b>\$860,218</b>	<b>\$597,112,905</b>	<b>1.1%</b>

### Committee Analysis and Comments

**Homeless Prevention:** Homeless prevention can be defined broadly to include emergency cash assistance, conflict resolution support, and legal assistance to prevent evictions, as well as robust discharge planning and strategic supports for populations known to be at heightened risk of experiencing homelessness. In this report, the Committee will focus on three programs that are central to the Department of Human Services' homeless prevention strategy: Emergency Rental Assistance Program ("ERAP"), Homelessness Prevention Program ("HPP"), and Project Reconnect. Even though the risk of homelessness is likely to increase as a result of challenges associated with the public health emergency and the recent announcement that the United States entered an economic recession in February 2020,<sup>89</sup> these three programs saw a total decrease of about \$1.2 million in the FY2021 proposed budget.

Emergency Rental Assistance Program. "ERAP helps low-income, District residents who are facing housing emergencies, or at imminent risk for homelessness."<sup>90</sup> ERAP has often been considered the first line of defense against homelessness because it is intended to prevent homelessness before it occurs. The FY2021 proposed budget allocates \$6,758,391 for ERAP, a reduction of \$1,115,000 P from the amount funded FY2020.<sup>91</sup> Advocates have clearly expressed concern that even maintaining flat funding for ERAP would not have been enough to meet the great demand.

In FY2019, all but \$227 of the funds allocated to ERAP were spent and 75 families were denied ERAP because funds were depleted (an increase from the 61 applicants denied in FY2018).<sup>92</sup> According to Samantha Koshgarian, Staff Attorney for the Legal Aid Society, the number of people denied ERAP may be even higher because the "figure does not appear to account for those individuals who may have been prevented from applying in the first instance because of [sic] these providers stopped scheduling appointments based on their lack of funding."<sup>93</sup> While flat funding for ERAP would likely not be enough in a normal year, the public health emergency and associated social and economic impacts will only exacerbate the pressures placed on the program.

Director Zeilinger recognized the importance of rental assistance programs in forestalling entrance into the shelter system and noted that the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) will launch a COVID-19 Emergency Housing Assistance program using "\$6.2 million in

<sup>89</sup> "Determination of the February 2020 Peak in US Economic Activity", June 8, 2020, The National Bureau of Economic Research, available at <https://www.nber.org/cycles/june2020.html> ("The committee has determined that a peak in monthly economic activity occurred in the U.S. economy in February 2020. The peak marks the end of the expansion that began in June 2009 and the beginning of a recession").

<sup>90</sup> 2020 Performance Oversight Responses, Department of Human Services, Q1. ("A housing emergency is when immediate action is needed to avoid homelessness, to re-establish a home, or to prevent eviction from a home. ERAP can help to pay overdue rent, including late costs and court fees, if eviction is about to happen, security deposit for a new residence, and/or first month's rent").

<sup>91</sup> The Mayor's *Errata* letter indicated that the Council should restore \$1.1 million, which was removed from ERAP as a result of "a drafting error." However, the Mayor's letter did not offer any new sources of funding to correct their mistake.

<sup>92</sup> 2020 Performance Oversight Responses, Department of Human Services, Q111(g).

<sup>93</sup> *Performance Oversight Hearing: Department of Human Services*. January 29, 2020. Testimony of Samantha Koshgarian, Staff Attorney, Legal Aid Society of the District of Columbia.

Community Development Block Grant funds from the federal CARES Act.”<sup>94</sup> DHCD is also using “\$1.5 million of existing federal HOME funds to create a Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) program, the first in DHCD’s history, that will assist as many as 400 tenants of small buildings experiencing COVID-related income loss, pay their rent for six months.”<sup>95</sup> The Committee is aware of a number of other federal funds that could be used for rental assistance including \$23 million authorized by the CARES Act in Emergency Solutions Grants (“ESG”),<sup>96</sup> Coronavirus Relief Funds, as well as additional federal funds from the Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions Act (Heroes Act), if it is enacted.

Despite a great deal of optimism around the expansion of available federal funds, the Committee remains concerned about the lack of clarity with regard to the amount of funds that will be available, how and when they can be used, as well as whether or not they will be enough to meet what is projected to be a large increase in demand. Additionally, unlike ERAP, which is fully funded using local dollars, federally funded programs cannot be used to serve undocumented residents.<sup>97</sup> Overall, witnesses at the Budget Oversight Hearing requested an additional investment of \$12 million in ERAP. The Committee is working with its colleagues in Council to ensure the total local investment in ERAP equals as close to \$12 million as possible. To this end, the Committee, with the help of the Committee on Facilities and Procurement, Committee on Health, the Committee on Recreation and Youth Affairs, and the Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety, is allocating \$566,000 one-time funds and \$174,000 in recurring funds to ERAP. Additionally, the Committee strongly recommends that the Mayor and DHS allocate additional federal funds to ERAP, including a significant portion of the \$23 million in ESG.

**Homelessness Prevention Program.** “The Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP) works to prevent a family at imminent risk of losing housing from becoming homeless through the provision of stabilizing services and resources while briefly utilizing their existing support system.” <sup>98</sup>

<sup>94</sup> *Budget Oversight Hearing: Department of Human Services*. May 26, 2020. Testimony of Laura Zeilinger, Director, Department of Human Services (“This will provide up to three months of COVID-related rental arrears to low-income households. The program will specifically assist those persons unable to afford their housing due to the COVID-19 pandemic that are not currently assisted by DHS’ Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) or other local and federal project- and tenant-based rental assistance efforts”). *See also Budget Oversight Hearing: Department of Housing and Community Development*. June 15, 2020. Testimony of Polly Donaldson, Director, DHCD (“DHCD used \$1.5 million of existing federal HOME funds to create a Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) program, the first in DHCD’s history, that will assist as many as 400 tenants of small buildings experiencing COVID-related income loss, pay their rent for six months. \* \* \* Through two community-based organizations, this program is already accepting applications. Due diligence is underway on over 150 buildings and tenants will start to be qualified soon”).

<sup>95</sup> *Budget Oversight Hearing: Department of Housing and Community Development*. June 15, 2020. Testimony of Polly Donaldson, Director, DHCD.

<sup>96</sup> “Mayor Bowser Announces New Programs to Support Rental Assistance and Housing Stability,” June 18, 2020, available at [https://mayor.dc.gov/release/mayor-bowser-announces-new-programs-support-rental-assistance-and-housing-stability#:~:text=\(Washington%2C%20DC\)%20%E2%80%93%20Today,COVID%2D19%20public%20health%20emergency.&text=CHAP%20is%20being%20delivered%20in,Rental%20Assistance%20Program%20\(ERAP\).](https://mayor.dc.gov/release/mayor-bowser-announces-new-programs-support-rental-assistance-and-housing-stability#:~:text=(Washington%2C%20DC)%20%E2%80%93%20Today,COVID%2D19%20public%20health%20emergency.&text=CHAP%20is%20being%20delivered%20in,Rental%20Assistance%20Program%20(ERAP).)

<sup>97</sup> *Budget Oversight Hearing: Department of Human Services*. May 22, 2020. Written testimony of Scott Bruton, Vice President Vice President for Housing Policy Coalition for Nonprofit Housing and Economic Development.

<sup>98</sup> 2020 Performance Oversight Responses, Department of Human Services, Q1 (“Supportive services offered include: diversion and mediation services, case management/case coordination, financial assistance, utility assistance, rental assistance, housing search, budgeting and credit repair services, connection to housing programs

Clients who come to the Virginia Williams Family Resource Center (“VWFRC”) are referred to HPP for housing assistance if they are not referred to a shelter.<sup>99</sup> In FY2019, HPP received 3,185 referrals with the following outcomes: 252 were placed in shelter; 886 leased up; 678 were permanently diverted with family/friends; 642 were closed for no contact; and 727 cases were reopened.<sup>100</sup> In the first quarter of FY2020, HPP received 618 referrals with the following outcomes: 50 were placed in shelter; 184 lease up; 133 were permanently diverted with family/friends; 86 were closed for no contact; and 165 cases were reopened.<sup>101</sup>

In FY2020, the Mayor’s proposed budget increased funding for HPP by about \$1,248,000. Although the Committee was concerned that the enhancement was made at the expense of cuts to ERAP, it maintained the enhancement and found other ways to bolster ERAP funding. This year, the Mayor once again is increasing the funding for HPP with a \$204,000 enhancement in the FY2021 proposed budget.

Project Reconnect. “Project Reconnect is a shelter diversion and rapid exit program for unaccompanied adults experiencing homelessness.”<sup>102</sup> Earlier this year, DHS explained the need for and efficacy of Project Reconnect, explaining that since its April 2019 launch, it has successfully completed 70 diversions, and received 207 referrals.<sup>103</sup> DHS also explained that since its launch, enrollment has steadily increased. However, the FY2021 proposed budget includes a \$1.25 million reduction in funding. According to Kate Coventry, Senior Policy Analyst for DCFPI, the reason for the funding reduction is fewer individuals than anticipated enrolled in the program.<sup>104</sup> The Committee agrees with DHS that “[e]arly intervention and individual support can minimize, and in some cases mitigate, the impact of an episode of homelessness or housing crisis.”<sup>105</sup> Furthermore, since the Budget Oversight Hearing, the Committee has learned that various changes were made to Project Reconnect that are expected to reduce barriers to participation and increase enrollment. The Way Home Campaign continues to request restoration of the cut funds as well as an enhancement beyond what was included in the FY2021 proposed budget. Given budgetary constraints and concerns about enrollment raised by DHS, the Committee recommends fully restoring the FY2021 reduction to Project Reconnect, in anticipation of greater participation in the coming fiscal year. Additionally, the Committee looks forward to working with DHS and stakeholders to investigate why the program has been under enrolled and what steps can be taken to reduce barriers to participation as well as improve its responsiveness to the needs of the clients it is intended to serve.

including first month’s rent/security deposit, short term rental assistance, referrals to community partners and District agencies, connection to TANF vendors”).

<sup>99</sup> 2019 Performance Oversight Responses, Department of Human Services, Q49.

<sup>100</sup> *Id.*, Q120(b).

<sup>101</sup> *Id.*, Q120(b).

<sup>102</sup> *Id.*, Q39.

<sup>103</sup> *Id.*, Q39 (“Of successful diversions in FY19, 16 were reconnections with family and friends that included a formal host agreement to solidify the client’s housing arrangement, while 35 were related to rental assistance, including security deposits and payments of arrears to prevent a potential loss of housing”).

<sup>104</sup> *Budget Oversight Hearing: Department of Human Services*. May 22, 2020. Testimony of Kate Coventry, Senior Policy Analyst, DC Fiscal Policy Institute.

<sup>105</sup> 2020 Performance Oversight Responses, Department of Human Services, Q39.



***Street Outreach for the Homeless:*** Last year, the Committee heard testimony from a number of advocates expressing concern that there would be a gap in homeless outreach services due to the expiration of the Cooperative Agreements to Benefit Homeless Individuals (“CABHI”) federal grant awarded to the Department of Behavioral Health (“DBH”). The CABHI grant was used to fund mental health workers as street outreach teams to connect, assess, and assist homeless adults who are most vulnerable. The street outreach teams funded by DBH helped guide individuals experiencing homelessness to appropriate housing. In response to these concerns, the Committee encouraged DHS to work with ICH, DBH, and service providers who conduct street outreach so that there is meaningful outreach of the appropriate intensity and coverage to address the needs of homeless people at all times throughout the District. Additionally, the Committee Chair worked closely with the rest of her Council colleagues to find about \$3.8 million to invest in the creation of a DHS administered homeless outreach program referred to as the Comprehensive Street Outreach Network.

The Street Outreach team engages individuals who are living on the streets and are experiencing homelessness.<sup>106</sup> Street Outreach efforts consist of, but are not limited to, sharing information on homeless resources, encampment assessments, vulnerability assessments, distribution of blankets, water, fruit and warming supplies, and working with the community and sister agencies to ensure the wellbeing of the District’s residents experiencing homelessness.<sup>107</sup> Kate Coventry, Senior Policy Analyst for DCFPI pointed out that outreach is particularly critical during this pandemic as daytime service centers are closed and workers monitor the health of homeless residents and help meet their medical and other needs.<sup>108</sup>

Despite the importance of this program, the FY2021 proposed budget includes a reduction of \$2.13 million in one-time funding. During the Budget Oversight Hearing, Director Zeilinger explained that the program is new, and therefore it is not possible to judge its efficacy. She added that DBH will likely be getting additional funds to address street outreach and that close coordination will be necessary. The Committee supports close coordination between DBH and DHS. However, the programmatic goals of the DBH program do not fully align with those of the Street Outreach Network. Therefore, the Committee, with the help of the Committee on Facilities and Procurement, is allocating \$158,000 in one-time funds. The Committee will work with the rest of Council to fully restore the remaining funds to the Street Outreach Network.

***Family Shelter System:*** In October 2018, DHS accomplished an important step in the Homeward DC plan by successfully exiting all families from DC General and closing the facility for good. This and other investments in the family shelter system appears to be paying dividends as the 2020 Point-In-Time Count shows that families experiencing homelessness decreased by 8.0 percent from last year.<sup>109</sup>

<sup>106</sup> *Id.*, Q1.

<sup>107</sup> *Id.*, Q1.

<sup>108</sup> *Budget Oversight Hearing: Department of Human Services*. May 22, 2020. Testimony of Kate Coventry, Senior Policy Analyst, DC Fiscal Policy Institute.

<sup>109</sup> “Homelessness in Metropolitan Washington: Results and Analysis from the Annual Point-in-Time (PIT) Count of Persons Experiencing Homelessness,” MWCOG, June 2020, Appendix B, p. 22 (decreased from 2,646 families to 2,433 families).

Furthermore, with DC General closed, the family shelter system is now comprised largely of three placement types: Short-Term Family Housing, Apartment-Style Shelter, and Emergency Overflow Shelters (Hotels). In FY2019, the median length of stay at each placement was 88 days, 254 days, and 119 days, respectively.<sup>110</sup> The shorter length of stay at STFH sites helped the agency reduce the family shelter census from nearly 600 families to approximately 500 families in FY2019, despite the number of families entering shelter increasing over the previous year.<sup>111</sup> At this time, all planned STFH sites have been opened except for the Ward 1 facility, which is currently under construction.<sup>112</sup> The Mayor's FY2021 Budget includes \$7.8 million in new investments to operate and provide wraparound services at the existing, new, and soon-to-be-opened STFH sites.<sup>113</sup>

While the Committee is pleased that DHS was able to maintain an average length of stay under 90 days at the STFH facilities through the first quarter of FY2020, a critique that has been lodged is that maintenance of these timelines puts pressure on staff and residents to focus most of their energy on finding housing, thus leaving less time or attention for other supportive services that can and should be offered while there. At the budget oversight hearing, multiple advocates pointed out that “children and youth in most DC family shelter settings are not receiving comprehensive case management services tailored to their needs.”<sup>114</sup> In her testimony, Kimberly Perry, the Executive Director of DC Action for Children, requested that DHS work with community leaders to develop a Children's Services Coordination Plan in each family shelter setting.<sup>115</sup> The Committee supports this request and will continue to communicate with DHS and stakeholders to see that it is considered as we complete the final STFH site and fully exit from Overflow Hotels.

The Emergency Overflow Shelters/Hotels comprise the other most critical piece of the family shelter system at this time. In December 2019, DHS projected that the agency would be able to close its remaining two Overflow Hotels, the Days Inn and Quality Inn, in the third quarter of FY2020 and the first quarter of FY2021, respectively. Now, the projected exit date from the Days Inn is 4th quarter FY2021 and the projected exit date from the Quality Inn is July 2020. The delayed exit from the Days Inn can be attributed to a number of factors including delays in completing the STFH sites as well as the current public health emergency, which stalled the lease up process and has resulted in a continued slow-down in system flow for transitions from emergency shelter to permanent housing.<sup>116</sup> “Accordingly, the FY2021 Proposed Budget includes

<sup>110</sup> 2020 Performance Oversight Responses, Department of Human Services, Q64.

<sup>111</sup> *Id.*, Q38.

<sup>112</sup> The Ward 1 STFH site has an expected project completion date of Fall 2020. *See* Short Term Family Housing Construction Projects – Ward One, Department of General Services, available at <https://dgs.dc.gov/page/short-term-family-housing-construction-projects-wardone>.

<sup>113</sup> *Budget Oversight Hearing: Department of Human Services*. May 26, 2020. Testimony of Laura Zeilinger, Director, Department of Human Services.

<sup>114</sup> *Budget Oversight Hearing: Department of Human Services*. May 22, 2020. Testimony of Jamila Larson, Executive Director, Homeless Children's Playtime Project.

<sup>115</sup> *Budget Oversight Hearing: Department of Human Services*. May 22, 2020. Written testimony of Kimberly Perry, Executive Director, DC Action for Children (“Having a Children's Services Coordinator in shelter settings is considered, nationally, a best practice in a two-generational approach serving children and families experiencing homelessness”).

<sup>116</sup> *Budget Oversight Hearing: Department of Human Services*. May 26, 2020. Testimony of Laura Zeilinger, Director, Department of Human Services.

a \$2 million enhancement for hotels as overflow family emergency shelter.”<sup>117</sup> Although disappointed in the delay, the Committee appreciates the decision to invest an additional \$2 million in Overflow Hotels to ensure that the District is able to fulfill its legal mandate to provide shelter to families year-round. The Committee will continue to monitor the steps taken to exit families from emergency shelter into STFH sites or ideally, into permanent housing, with a keen eye on emergency shelter capacity as we continue to address the challenges posed by the public health emergency. Until DHS has exited all families from the Overflow Hotels, the Committee will also monitor the access to essentials and other basic services such as internet and transportation to and from school.

***Unaccompanied Adult Shelter System and Covid-19:*** In contrast to families experiencing homelessness, in this year’s Point-In-Time Count, the number of unaccompanied individuals experiencing homelessness increased by 1.9 percent, “which followed increases of 2.8 percent from 2018 to 2019 and 5.2 percent from 2017 to 2018.”<sup>118</sup> This tracks with the reality that the amount of investment and innovation in the unaccompanied adult shelter system has not tracked with that of the family shelter system. It was not until 2019 that the District was able to turn more attention and resources to shelter improvements for unaccompanied adults. The design process for a new 801 East Men’s Shelter on St. Elizabeth’s Campus has been completed and construction is set to begin in 2020.<sup>119</sup> Planning is also underway to replace the Harriet Tubman Women’s Shelter and to conduct extensive renovations of the New York Avenue Men’s Shelter, Blair Shelter, and Emery Shelter which serve men experiencing homelessness.<sup>120</sup>

Even with these investments and the February 2019 opening of the Downtown Day Center, currently the unaccompanied adult shelter system is predominated by dorm-style congregate placements. This includes one of the largest shelters in the country, CCNV. Furthermore, the population of unaccompanied adults experiencing homelessness is made up of a number subpopulations with heightened vulnerability – 21.5% of unaccompanied adults experiencing homelessness in the District have chronic health problems, 2.5% live with HIV/AIDS, and on a national level, the number of single adults experiencing homelessness over the age of 62 continues to grow each year.<sup>121</sup>

While already a very vulnerable population, individuals experiencing homelessness are particularly likely to acquire the virus that causes COVID-19 because of their age, vulnerabilities, exposure to many people while living in dormitory-style shelter, and/or lack of access to facilities

<sup>117</sup> *Id.*

<sup>118</sup> “Homelessness in Metropolitan Washington: Results and Analysis from the Annual Point-in-Time (PIT) Count of Persons Experiencing Homelessness,” MWCOCG, June 2020, Appendix B, p. 22 (the number of unaccompanied individuals experiencing homelessness increased to 3,974 in 2020 from 3,875 in 2019).

<sup>119</sup> *Id.*, Appendix B, p. 20 (“The new shelter is designed with different spaces to meet the unique needs of various subpopulations (such as seniors, persons with physical disabilities, individuals who are working or seeking employment, etc.). The objective of this new facility is to provide more tailored assistance with the goal of helping individuals exit homelessness to permanent housing more quickly”).

<sup>120</sup> *Id.*

<sup>121</sup> *Id.*, Appendix B, p. 26, 28.

for sanitation.<sup>122</sup> It should also be acknowledged that 73 percent of single adults experiencing homelessness in the Metropolitan Washington region are African American.<sup>123</sup> Because of preexisting health conditions of individuals experiencing homelessness, they may be twice as likely to be hospitalized and more than two times as likely to die from complications related to the virus that causes COVID-19.<sup>124</sup>

The Department of Human Services deserves a great deal of credit for quickly implementing preventative measures in its shelter system in response to the public health emergency.<sup>125</sup> Additionally, DHS has taken steps to increase overall capacity while reducing density individual shelters. At first, the District took steps to expand shelter capacity by utilizing seasonal overflow shelters like Malcom X and Green Leaf recreation centers. For various reasons, these seasonal overflow shelters are not suitable for long-term stays and have subsequently been closed. As pressure on the shelter system continued to increase, DHS brought online 84 beds at CCNV. Additionally, in partnership with DHS, Unity is now treating medically vulnerable and COVID-19 positive patients experiencing homelessness at four Isolation and Quarantine (“ISAQ”) and two Pandemic Emergency Program for Highly Vulnerable Individuals (“PEPV”) sites with 876 total beds.<sup>126</sup>

Despite these efforts, as of June 12, 2020, 308 individuals in shelter have tested positive and 18 individuals have died in the Homeless Services System.<sup>127</sup> The Committee believes that these numbers demonstrate that the District is not doing enough. As a starting point, the target capacity levels to support social distancing at each shelter are far too high. Even so, because of demand, many shelters have been unable to meet these conservative targets.

Location	Normal Capacity	COVID Capacity (Target)	% of Normal Capacity (Target)	Census Count (6/10)	% of Normal Capacity (6/10)	Positives Cases (Through 6/9)
Pat Handy	156	105	67%	102	65%	21
801 East	382	220	58%	246	64%	48
Adams Place	150	100	67%	112	75%	<10
New York Avenue	360	200	56%	200	56%	93
Harriett Tubman	175	120	69%	138	79%	11
CCNV (men)	-	60	-	61	102%**	49

<sup>122</sup> “COVID-19 Makes It Clear: Housing is Healthcare,” Kate Coventry, DCFPI, available at <https://www.dcfpi.org/all/covid-19-makes-it-clear-housing-is-healthcare/>.

<sup>123</sup> “Homelessness in Metropolitan Washington: Results and Analysis from the Annual Point-in-Time (PIT) Count of Persons Experiencing Homelessness,” MWCOG, June 2020, p. 22.

<sup>124</sup> “COVID-19 Makes It Clear: Housing is Healthcare,” Kate Coventry, DCFPI, available at <https://www.dcfpi.org/all/covid-19-makes-it-clear-housing-is-healthcare/>.

<sup>125</sup> Resources for Homeless Service Providers, DHS, available at <https://dhs.dc.gov/page/resources-homeless-service-providers>.

<sup>126</sup> *Budget Oversight Hearing: Department of Human Services*. May 22, 2020. Testimony of Vincent A. Keane, Executive Director, Unity Health Care.

<sup>127</sup> Human Services Agency COVID-19 Case Data, June 12, 2020, available at <https://coronavirus.dc.gov/page/human-services-agency-covid-19-case-data>.

CCNV (women)	-	24	-	20	83%**	
ISAQ	528*	-	-	88	17%	-
PEPV	366*	-	-	173	47%	-
*Represents total capacity for ISAQ and PEPV						
**Percent of Covid-19 capacity						

What concerns the Committee is that while shelters continue to maintain a level of density that does not permit social distancing, the District has a large reserve of non-congregate capacity that is currently unused (as of 6/10/2020) – 440 rooms of ISAQ; 193 rooms of PEPV; and 437 beds at the alternate care site located at the Convention Center. In addition to this unused capacity, reduced density in shelters could be achieved by more aggressively leveraging FEMA funds to bring online more District hotels that remain vacant as a result of the languishing tourism industry. It is concerning that despite what many project to be a growing demand, the FY2021 proposed budget includes a \$3.6 million reduction to the homeless services continuum. The Committee strongly recommends that the District immediately take steps to reduce the populations in each shelter to no greater than 50% of its normal capacity using existing capacity in non-congregate placements and leveraging all available local and federal resources to expand capacity as needed.<sup>128</sup>

***Comprehensive Plan to End Youth Homelessness:*** With the goal of making youth homelessness in the District “a rare, brief, and nonrecurring experience” by 2022,<sup>129</sup> DHS, the Interagency Council on Homelessness (ICH) working group, and community stakeholders created *Solid Foundations DC: Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness* (“Youth Plan”).<sup>130</sup> This was the first comprehensive plan to end youth homelessness in the District. In 2015, there were 545 homeless or housing insecure youth, with 58 youth being homeless or housing insecure under 18, and 487 transition aged youth (age 18-under 25).<sup>131</sup>

In Year 1 of the Youth Plan (FY2018), the Committee filled a \$3.3 million gap in funding to ensure full implementation, including additional shelter beds, PSH units, transitional housing slots, and Aftercare slots for youth reunifying with family. In Year 2 (FY2019), the Mayor’s proposed budget included \$500,000 for a 24-hour Drop-In Center, \$660,000 for crisis shelter beds for Transition-Aged Youth, \$250,000 for five additional transitional housing beds, and \$300,000 for 10 PSH units with supportive services. Once again, the Committee allocated additional funds to help close the budget gap including \$720,000 for 16 additional transitional housing beds and \$210,000 for 7 additional PSH units with services. In Year 3 (FY2020), the Mayor’s proposed budget included \$2.5 million in new investments, including \$513,540 for 15 PSH vouchers, \$975,000 for 30 RRH slots, and \$966,000 for 23 additional transitional housing beds. Working closely with the advocate community, the Committee reallocated the additional investment in RRH to fund Permanent

<sup>128</sup> ReOpen DC Recommendations to the Mayor, May 21, 2020, p. 20, available at <https://cdn.flipsnack.com/widget/v2/flipsnackwidget.html?hash=fungraelc&t=&fullscreen=1> (“Expand the use of hotel rooms for residents experiencing homelessness who have become infected or have been exposed to COVID-19 or have the highest prevalence of COVID-19 risk factors”).

<sup>129</sup> This plan is intended to be a five-year plan, implemented over five full budget cycles (FY2018 – FY2022).

<sup>130</sup> *Solid Foundations DC: Comprehensive Plan to End Youth Homelessness*, available at [https://ich.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ich/page\\_content/attachments/Solid%20Foundations%20DC%20\\_web%201.5.pdf](https://ich.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ich/page_content/attachments/Solid%20Foundations%20DC%20_web%201.5.pdf).

<sup>131</sup> 2015 Homeless Youth Census conducted by the Interagency Council on Homelessness.



Supportive Housing for youth. In total, the Committee made an additional investment of \$2.67 million including, 35 units of PSH, 27 units of transitional housing, and 60 shelter beds.

The FY2021 proposed budget (Year 4 of the Youth Plan) does not include any obvious enhancements to the Youth Plan. However, in response to advocacy, DHS agreed to increase the per bed allocation for extended transitional housing (“ETH”) placements from \$34,236 to \$50,000, without reducing the number of funded ETH beds (86 beds). ETH includes housing and intensive supportive services for the most vulnerable youth ages 18 through 24 years of age for up to six years with the goal of stabilizing the youth and preparing them for independence as they transition to adulthood.<sup>132</sup> Although advocates were hoping to get a per bed allocation of \$55,000, the increase to \$50,000 brings the per bed cost above that of Transitional Housing placements (about \$42,000 per bed) and on par with the per bed price of longer running ETH programs<sup>133</sup>.

Even with this important investment, the Committee is concerned about a number of reductions in the Youth Plan budget. First, the FY2021 proposed budget includes a sweep of \$1,320,000 recurring local dollars that were allocated by the Committee last year to fund 27 Transition Age Youth (“TAY”) Shelter beds. Although this does not affect the availability of TAY Shelter beds in FY2021 because \$1,320,000 one-time funds were restored, it does represent a reduction of \$3,960,000 to this line item across the financial plan. This means that for the next three years, the District will have to identify funding to continue making these TAY Shelter beds available. Second, the FY2021 proposed budget includes a \$1.6 million reduction to the Youth Homeless Services Continuum. According to DHS, this reduction is due to various savings and a reallocation of funds. Even if that is the case, the Committee has fought hard over the years to make recurring enhancements in the Youth Plan budget and any reductions are concerning.

The Committee is aware and appreciative that DHS was awarded a \$4 million grant from HUD to help extend the stay of youth in the youth homeless system during the public health emergency. The Committee is also supportive of DHS and its partners working to fully leverage additional federal funding opportunities to serve this population, including funding through the Runaway and Homeless Youth Program.<sup>134</sup>

Finally, the Committee is aware that transgender and gender non-conforming youth (“TGNC”) are disproportionately represented in the population experiencing homelessness and face a variety of unique challenges which are not always appropriately addressed with existing services. The Committee will work with stakeholders to strategies and supports that will help TGNC youth avoid homelessness and achieve financial independence and sustainability. Specifically, the Committee will work to establish and fund such a program for TGNC youth.

***Permanent Supportive Housing (“PSH”) and Targeted Affordable Housing (“TAH”):*** “The Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) program provides long-term permanent housing to eligible chronically homeless individuals and families who continue to be at imminent risk of becoming

<sup>132</sup> 2020 Performance Oversight Responses, Department of Human Services, Q50.

<sup>133</sup> *Id.*, Q44 (DC Doors and Sasha Bruce have ETH contracts that are based on a \$50,000 per bed price).

<sup>134</sup> Runaway & Homeless Youth, Family and Youth Services Bureau, *available at* <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/fysb/programs/runaway-homeless-youth>.

homeless and need intensive case management.”<sup>135</sup> Eligibility for PSH is based on a vulnerability assessment and expansion of this program is widely considered the best strategy to end chronic homelessness. When a lighter touch is more appropriate, “[t]he Targeted Affordable Housing (TAH) Program includes a long-term housing subsidy and case management services.”<sup>136</sup> With TAH, “[t]he household can independently function without intensive case management and is connected to community resources in order to remain stably housed.”<sup>137</sup>

The FY2021 proposed budget includes an enhancement of about \$2.1 million for 54 new units of Permanent Supportive Housing (“PSH”) for families and about \$2.8 million for 96 new units of PSH for individuals. The proposed budget includes no new investments in Targeted Affordable Housing (“TAH”) for families or individuals. The Way Home Campaign<sup>138</sup> recommends that the District invest in 1,500 new units of PSH for individuals and 300 new units of PSH for families.<sup>139</sup> This recommendation is backed by the Fair Budget Coalition,<sup>140</sup> which also asks the District to invest in 712 new units of TAH for families.<sup>141</sup>

In FY2020, the Mayor and Council combined to make a substantial investment in PSH and TAH including the following enhancements: \$7.9 million to PSH for individuals (585 slots); \$6.3 million to PSH for families (180 slots); \$420,000 for TAH for individuals (30 slots); and \$5 million to TAH for families (203 slots). In consultation with the Committee on Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization, it has been determined that as a result of serious delays in leasing up vouchers caused by the public health emergency, there will be upwards of 200 vouchers, connected with the Permanent Supportive Housing program, that will not be leased up by the end of FY2020. This equates to approximately \$6 million designated for PSH vouchers that will not be spent, on a one-time basis, in FY2020. In light of the great need conveyed by the Way Home Campaign and Fair Budget Coalition, as well as the Housing Authority’s underspending in FY2020, the Committee, in close coordination with the Committee on Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization, is increasing funding by \$321,600 to provide wrap around services for an additional 50 units of PSH for Individuals in FY2021. The Committee will also be transferring \$520,479 in recurring funds to the Committee on Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization to fund the rental costs for an additional 22.662 units of PSH for Individuals. The Committee encourages the Council to work together to address the remaining FY2021 funding gaps, particularly as related to housing for individuals.

**Rapid Rehousing:** One of the primary tools DHS uses to exit families and individuals from emergency and low barrier shelter is the Rapid Rehousing program (“RRH”). The Rapid Rehousing for Individuals (“RRH-I”) Program “provides access to permanent housing with the

<sup>135</sup> 2020 Performance Oversight Responses, Department of Human Services, Q1.

<sup>136</sup> *Id.*

<sup>137</sup> *Id.*

<sup>138</sup> The Way Home Campaign is a group of private businesses and non-profit organizations advocating for the end of chronic homeless.

<sup>139</sup> FY2021 Budget Priorities (Council), Way Home Campaign, available at <https://cqrcengage.com/miriamskitchen/FY2021>.

<sup>140</sup> Who We Are, Fair Budget Coalition, available at <http://fairbudget.org/who-we-are.html>.

<sup>141</sup> Fair Budget Coalition FY21 Budget Report, Fair Budget Coalition, available at <http://fairbudget.org/fy21.html>.

use of temporary financial supports and case management assistance.”<sup>142</sup> The FY2021 proposed budget maintains the funding level for RRH-I at \$6,181,635.

Rapid Rehousing for families is also referred to as the Family Rehousing and Stabilization Program (“FRSP”).<sup>143</sup> During FY2019, 458 individuals and 2,200 families participated in the respective program.<sup>144</sup> Through the first quarter of FY2020, 383 individuals and 2,298 families have participated in the programs.<sup>145</sup> The FY2020 Approved Budget for FRSP was approximately \$20 million. However, this has ended up being a gross underestimation of the need, which is much closer to \$50 million, due to a number of factors including delayed exits as result of the public health emergency. The Agency has tried to fill this void by reallocating some funds in the FY2020 budget as well as by adding \$12 million from outside sources through the Fiscal Year 2020 Revised Local Budget Emergency Act of 2020.<sup>146</sup> With the addition of the \$12 million from the Supplemental Budget, the total amount allocated to FRSP in FY2020 is about \$44 million. Therefore, the FY2021 Proposed Budget of \$32,090,070 for FRSP is a reduction of approximately \$12 million.<sup>147</sup>

In the fall of 2019, “DHS launched the FRSP Task Force to collaboratively work with stakeholders to assess what is working and not working in the program and develop recommendations to improve the experiences and outcomes of families related to housing sustainability.”<sup>148</sup> The Task Force’s final report was submitted to Director Zeilinger on January 15, 2020, and it contains a number of recommendations including a total re-imaging of FRSP as a two pathways model.<sup>149</sup> The Committee looks forward to participating in continued engagement with DHS and stakeholders to see the Task Force’s recommendations implemented.

For the following reasons, the Committee is not making any reductions to the FY2021 proposed budget for RRH-I and FRSP and it strongly encourages the Council to maintain the proposed funding level. First, Director Zeilinger testified at the Budget Oversight Hearing that the enhancement to FRSP is critical to ensuring families are not exited before they are ready, and DHS

<sup>142</sup> 2020 Performance Oversight Responses, Department of Human Services, Q1.

<sup>143</sup> *Id.* (FRSP “helps families achieve stability in permanent housing through individualized and time-limited assistance. FRSP offers a wide range of supports that are responsive to participant needs including: individualized case management services, housing identification, connection to mainstream and community-based resources and financial assistance”).

<sup>144</sup> *Id.*, Q22.

<sup>145</sup> *Id.*

<sup>146</sup> B23-0763.

<sup>147</sup> In various budget materials, it was reported that the FY2021 proposed budget included an increase of \$9.2 million for FRSP. \$2 million of the \$9.2 million are actually allocated to the continuation of the hotel contracts and the remaining \$7.2 million is an “increase” over the FY2020 approved budget.

<sup>148</sup> Family Rehousing and Stabilization (FRSP) Task Force, DHS, available at <https://dhs.dc.gov/page/family-rehousing-and-stabilization-frsp-task-force>.

<sup>149</sup> Report to the Director of DC Department of Human Services from the Family Rehousing and Stabilization Program (FRSP) Task Force, DHS, available at <https://dhs.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/dhs/publication/attachments/FRSP%20Task%20Force%20Final%20Report%2001152020.pdf>.



is able to maintain year-round access to shelter for families.<sup>150</sup> Director Zeilinger added that the enhancement will allow DHS to bridge families that qualify for PSH, TAH, and other housing subsidies until they become available.<sup>151</sup> Furthermore, because of the public health emergency, the Agency has not exited families from the program for at least two months. Finally, there is a great deal of uncertainty right now as a result of the public health emergency. It is hard to predict exactly how long it will last, how many people it will affect, and how much federal support will be made available and for how long. What we do know is that the public health emergency has slowed the matching and lease up process for DHS and DCHA. We also know that it has pushed the US economy into recession, which will likely place additional economic pressure on many of our most vulnerable families and lead to an increase in the number of families experiencing homelessness. As we work to get matching and lease ups running at full speed again, we will need to leverage all available tools to get people into housing as quickly as possible. The adage that housing is healthcare has never been more accurate and the Committee believes that in the context of the current public health emergency, getting people out of shelter and into housing, even if for a limited time, is of the highest priority.

**Increasing Access to Alliance.** Alliance is the District's health insurance program for undocumented District residents. To combat concerns of fraud, DHS requires people to have a face-to-face meeting with a DHS customer service representative to recertify that they are eligible for Alliance. The process of waiting in line to see a customer service representative and the actual interview take a considerable amount of time, especially as many people are turned away when service centers reach capacity for the day. Previously, the Council passed the "DC Healthcare Alliance Program Recertification Simplification Amendment Act of 2017".<sup>152</sup> This legislation would allow Alliance recipients to complete one bi-annual recertification interview by phone rather than in-person at the service centers. The Mayor returned this bill unsigned and unfunded.

Despite the Mayor's rejection of the legislation, DHS has taken action over the last couple of years to reduce the number of visits to service centers needed in order to recertify for the Alliance Health Care Program ("Alliance"). This has been achieved by conducting brief in-person interviews to verify information and allowing clients to leave paperwork behind for processing when service centers have reached capacity. Additionally, during the current public health emergency, DHS has changed their rules to permit automatic renewals for clients already enrolled in the programs and has stood up a public benefits portal that enables clients to enroll in the program remotely. During the first four months of 2020, including two months of the public health emergency, DHS has seen no increase in overall enrollment as a result of the changes to their policies. This data point leads to two very important conclusions. First, the fiscal impact assigned to the "DC Healthcare Alliance Program Recertification Simplification Amendment Act of 2017" is too high. Second, and this has been raised repeatedly by advocates, fewer people are signing up for Alliance for fear that they will be deported, a fear which has grown exponentially under the current president's administration. As a result, those eligible for Alliance or Medicaid may not be signing up for health care until they are too ill to worry about the threat of deportation.

<sup>150</sup> *Budget Oversight Hearing: Department of Human Services*. May 26, 2020. Testimony of Laura Zeilinger, Director, Department of Human Services.

<sup>151</sup> *Id.*

<sup>152</sup> D.C. Law 22-0035, effective December 13, 2017.

As we continue to address the challenges posed by a global pandemic, it has never been clearer how important it is that every single DC resident has healthcare, no matter their immigration status. Outside of the African American community, we know that Latinx residents are the hardest hit by COVID-19, accounting for 29% of the positive cases and 13% of the deaths in the District.<sup>153</sup> It is unclear how many more people have been suffering in the shadows or even showing up to work sick because of a lack of access to healthcare.

Because the District does not currently plan to continue automatic renewals and remote enrollment after the public health emergency ends, the Committee strongly urges the Council to act collectively to find new revenue to fund the “DC Healthcare Alliance Program Recertification Simplification Amendment Act of 2017”. If sufficient revenue cannot be raised, the Committee strongly urges the agency to find additional ways to leverage technology like the online benefits portal and the soon-to-be released app to make Alliance renewal and enrollment less burdensome.

**Domestic Violence:** The FY2021 proposed budget includes \$2,024,325 for Domestic Violence Services, almost exactly the same amount invested in the FY2020 approved budget. While the Committee commends the Mayor for not making any cuts to these services, despite very challenging budget constraints, very concerning testimony was offered at the Budget Oversight Hearing that suggest that flat funding will not be sufficient in FY2021. Dawn Dalton, Deputy Director of the DC Coalition Against Domestic Violence (“DCADV”), testified that “compared to this time last year, the DC Victim Hotline is seeing a 20 percent increase of calls related to intimate partner violence” and “an 80% increase in calls from survivors asking for help” to a culturally specific service provider.<sup>154</sup> Echoing a very similar sentiment, Elisabeth Olds, Director of Survivors and Advocates for Empowerment Inc., testified that “[s]ince the start of the Stay-At-Home Order issued by Mayor Bowser on April 1st, DC SAFE has experienced a 15% increase in requests for help with 2078 calls last month to our response line and 774 new referrals for services.”<sup>155</sup> The Committee also heard from Koube Ngaaje, Executive Director of the District Alliance for Safe Housing, Inc. Koube testified that “[s]ince the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, DASH has seen an alarming increase of housing and service requests for survivors and families--four times our regular volume—and we anticipate that the rise in requests will continue even beyond the height of the pandemic, with the economic, social, and health impacts having long-lasting effects.”<sup>156</sup>

While there were some minor differences in what was being requested by these organizations, there was near universal agreement that there needs to be an additional investment of \$2 million in Domestic Violence Services as well as an additional investment of \$3 million to help finance

<sup>153</sup> Coronavirus Data, June 12, 2020, available at <https://coronavirus.dc.gov/page/coronavirus-data>.

<sup>154</sup> *Budget Oversight Hearing: Department of Human Services*. May 22, 2020. Testimony of Dawn Dalton, Deputy Director, DC Coalition Against Domestic Violence (adding that “due to significantly less resources across the District, the time it takes for advocates to support survivors is increasing, with one DV program reporting at 44% increase in time spent assisting survivors in crisis”).

<sup>155</sup> *Budget Oversight Hearing: Department of Human Services*. May 22, 2020. Written testimony of Elisabeth Olds, Director, Survivors and Advocates for Empowerment (SAFE) Inc.

<sup>156</sup> *Budget Oversight Hearing: Department of Human Services*. May 22, 2020. Written testimony of Koube Ngaaje, Executive Director, District Alliance for Safe Housing, Inc.

the completion of DC SAFE's shelter expansion. The Committee will work closely with the rest of Council to try to find additional funding to support this very important work.

### 3. FISCAL YEAR 2021 CAPITAL BUDGET

#### Proposed Operating Budget Summary

Project No	Project Title	Allotment Scenario	Unspent Allotment (5-16-20)	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	6-year Total
CM5GSC	CASE MANAGEMENT SERVICES- FEDERAL	Available Balances	91,362,631	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>CM5GSC Total</b>			<b>91,362,631</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
CM5S1C	CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM - GO BOND	Available Balances	713,258	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>CM5S1C Total</b>			<b>713,258</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
HSW01C	WARD 1 TEMPORARY HOUSING FOR FAMILIES	Available Balances	19,457,523	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>HSW01C Total</b>			<b>19,457,523</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
HSW03C	WARD 3 TEMPORARY HOUSING FOR FAMILIES	Available Balances	6,582,783	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>HSW03C Total</b>			<b>6,582,783</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
HSW04C	WARD 4 TEMPORARY HOUSING FOR FAMILIES	Available Balances	752,364	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>HSW04C Total</b>			<b>752,364</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
HSW05C	WARD 5 TEMPORARY HOUSING FOR FAMILIES	Available Balances	1,088,419	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>HSW05C Total</b>			<b>1,088,419</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
HSW06C	WARD 6 TEMPORARY HOUSING FOR FAMILIES	Available Balances	4,034,922	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>HSW06C Total</b>			<b>4,034,922</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
HSW07C	WARD 7 TEMPORARY HOUSING FOR FAMILIES	Available Balances	525,550	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>HSW07C Total</b>			<b>525,550</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
HSW08C	WARD 8 TEMPORARY HOUSING FOR FAMILIES	Available Balances	925,330	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>HSW08C Total</b>			<b>925,330</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
PSH01C	PSH UNITS FOR SENIOR WOMEN	Approved FY20 CIP for FY21-25	0	34,682,000	0	0	0	0	0	34,682,000
		Mayor's Proposed FY21 CIP Change	0	(34,682,000)	29,682,000	0	0	0	0	(5,000,000)
		Available Balances	6,635,847	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		Mayor's Proposed FY20 Supplemental	(5,673,332)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>PSH01C Total</b>			<b>962,515</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>29,682,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>29,682,000</b>
SG127C	REPLACEMENT OF ACEDS	Available Balances	54	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>SG127C Total</b>			<b>54</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
SGAMXC	SEASONAL EMERGENCY SHELTER	Mayor's Proposed FY21 CIP Change	0	2,000,000	0	0	0	0	0	2,000,000
<b>SGAMXC Total</b>			<b>0</b>	<b>2,000,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,000,000</b>
TFS01C	SMALL CAPITAL PROJECTS	Mayor's Proposed FY21 CIP Change	0	1,737,000	0	0	0	0	0	1,737,000
		Available Balances	4,163,355	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>TFS01C Total</b>			<b>4,163,355</b>	<b>1,737,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,737,000</b>

THK16C	MP-TEMPORARY AND PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING	Available Balances	279,117	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
THK16C Total			279,117	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
THK17C	EMERGENCY AND TEMPORARY HOUSING UPGRADES	Available Balances	15,164,963	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
THK17C Total			15,164,963	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
THK18C	NEW YORK AVENUE UPGRADES/RENOVATIONS	Approved FY20 CIP for FY21-25	0	2,040,000	0	0	0	0	0	2,040,000
		Available Balances	9,535,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
THK18C Total			9,535,000	2,040,000	0	0	0	0	0	2,040,000
THK19C	EMERGENCY & TEMPORARY HOUSING FOR MEN	Available Balances	44,912,285	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
THK19C Total			44,912,285	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Department of Human Services Total			200,460,070	5,777,000	29,682,000	0	0	0	0	35,459,000

### Committee Analysis and Comments

The Committee supports the continued capital investment in STFH facilities as well as the program enhancements for the Department of Human Services. The proposed capital budget signals meaningful improvements to the system that will create dignified shelter spaces for unaccompanied adults experiencing homelessness and end the need to house families in overflow hotels.

**Harriet Tubman Shelter Replacement:** The funding for the Harriet Tubman Shelter Replacement is reduced by \$5 million and moved from FY2021 to FY2022 in the Mayor's proposed capital budget. This reduction is explained by a separation of the project into PSH units and the replacement of the Harriet Tubman Women's Shelter, which were previously planned to be co-located. Funds have been redirected to a 100-unit PSH building on Reservation 13.<sup>157</sup> The Mayor's proposed FY2020 supplemental budget also cut \$5.67 million from this project. The Mayor's *errata* letter indicated that the Council should restore this cut, which was removed from the Tubman Shelter project as a result of "a drafting error." The letter also seems to suggest that the FY2020 cut could be restored by transferring funds from an equal cut in the FY2020 budget of the Office of the Chief Financial Officer from their New Financial System capital project. The Committee supports these changes to the capital budget and will work with the rest of Council to address this issue. The Committee also approves of the continued build-out of PSH units and continues to support the planned replacement of the Tubman Shelter. However, Committee will pay close attention to the progress of this project as it is concerned that the bulk of the funding for it was pushed back one year.

**Planning Shelter Swing Space:** The FY2021 proposed capital budget includes a new project, AM0-SGAMX-SEASONAL EMERGENCY SHELTER. \$2M of funding for this project is intended to create swing space on District-owned property for hypothermia shelters while the

<sup>157</sup> Letter from Tyrone Garret, Executive Director of the District of Columbia Housing Authority to Chairman Phil Mendelson, October 30, 2019, available at <https://lms.dccouncil.us/downloads/LIMS/43485/Introduction/CA23-0334-Introduction.pdf>.

Malcom X facility is offline. The Committee recommends DHS and DGS work on finding a suitable District-owned location that can accommodate the projected capacity during hyperthermia and hypothermia seasons that can ensure social distancing. Furthermore, if expansion of the shelter system will be required in the fall in response to what some believe will be a spike in new COVID-19 cases, consideration should be given to choosing a space that is better suited for longer-term placements.

#### 4. COMMITTEE BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS

##### a. Fiscal Year 2021 Operating Budget Recommendations

The Committee recommends **approval** of the Mayor's proposed FY2021 operating budget for the Department of Human Services with the following modifications:

Program	Activity	Service	CSG	Comments	Frequency	FY2021 Recommendation
2000 - ECONOMIC SECURITY ADMINISTRATION	2040 - ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION SERVICES	E110 - ELIG SVCS: OFFICE OF DEPUTY	0011 - REGULAR PAY - CONT FULL TIME	Eliminate vacant FTE #00016463 salary	Recurring	(54,845.85)
2000 - ECONOMIC SECURITY ADMINISTRATION	2040 - ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION SERVICES	E110 - ELIG SVCS: OFFICE OF DEPUTY	0014 - FRINGE BENEFITS - CURR PERSONNEL	Eliminate vacant FTE #00016463 fringe	Recurring	(13,629.02)
2000 - ECONOMIC SECURITY ADMINISTRATION	2040 - ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION SERVICES	E115 - ELIG SVCS: IMA/ IMD	0011 - REGULAR PAY - CONT FULL TIME	Eliminate vacant FTE #00023563 salary	Recurring	(44,330.50)
2000 - ECONOMIC SECURITY ADMINISTRATION	2040 - ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION SERVICES	E115 - ELIG SVCS: IMA/ IMD	0014 - FRINGE BENEFITS - CURR PERSONNEL	Eliminate vacant FTE #00023563 fringe	Recurring	(11,015.99)
2000 - ECONOMIC SECURITY ADMINISTRATION	2040 - ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION SERVICES	E154 - STRATEGIC PLANNING & PROJECT MGMT	0011 - REGULAR PAY - CONT FULL TIME	Eliminate vacant FTE #9941 salary	Recurring	(71,845.00)
2000 - ECONOMIC SECURITY ADMINISTRATION	2040 - ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION SERVICES	E154 - STRATEGIC PLANNING & PROJECT MGMT	0014 - FRINGE BENEFITS - CURR PERSONNEL	Eliminate vacant FTE #9941 fringe	Recurring	(17,853.00)
5000 - FAMILY SERVICES	5014 - EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE (ERAP)	ERAP - EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE (ERAP)	0050 - SUBSIDIES AND TRANSFERS	One-time enhancement to the Emergency Rental Assistance Program supported by a transfer in from the Committee on Facilities and Procurement.	One-Time	200,000.00
5000 - FAMILY SERVICES	5014 - EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE (ERAP)	ERAP - EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE (ERAP)	0050 - SUBSIDIES AND TRANSFERS	One-time enhancement to the Emergency Rental Assistance Program supported by a transfer in from the Committee on Health.	One-Time	116,000.00

5000 - FAMILY SERVICES	5014 - EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE (ERAP)	ERAP - EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE (ERAP)	0050 - SUBSIDIES AND TRANSFERS	One-time enhancement to the Emergency Rental Assistance Program supported by a transfer in from the Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety.	One-Time	250,000.00
5000 - FAMILY SERVICES	5014 - EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE (ERAP)	ERAP - EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE (ERAP)	0050 - SUBSIDIES AND TRANSFERS	Recurring enhancement to the Emergency Rental Assistance Program supported by a transfer in from the Committee on Recreation and Youth Affairs.	Recurring	174,054.00
5000 - FAMILY SERVICES	5034 - PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING - INDIV	SH61 - PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING - INDIV	0050 - SUBSIDIES AND TRANSFERS	Enhancement for Permanent Supportive Housing for individuals to fund wrap around services and supports for up to 50 new Permanent Supportive Housing vouchers.	Recurring	321,600.00
5000 - FAMILY SERVICES	5037 - HOMELESS SERVICES CONTINUUM - FAMILIES	HC78 - SHELTER OPERATIONS: FAMILIES	0011 - REGULAR PAY - CONT FULL TIME	Eliminate vacant FTE #90694 salary	Recurring	(89,534.00)
5000 - FAMILY SERVICES	5037 - HOMELESS SERVICES CONTINUUM - FAMILIES	HC78 - SHELTER OPERATIONS: FAMILIES	0011 - REGULAR PAY - CONT FULL TIME	Eliminate vacant FTE #90704 salary	Recurring	(25,500.00)
5000 - FAMILY SERVICES	5037 - HOMELESS SERVICES CONTINUUM - FAMILIES	HC78 - SHELTER OPERATIONS: FAMILIES	0014 - FRINGE BENEFITS - CURR PERSONNEL	Eliminate vacant FTE #90694 fringe	Recurring	(22,383.00)
5000 - FAMILY SERVICES	5037 - HOMELESS SERVICES CONTINUUM - FAMILIES	HC78 - SHELTER OPERATIONS: FAMILIES	0014 - FRINGE BENEFITS - CURR PERSONNEL	Eliminate vacant FTE #90704 fringe	Recurring	(8,500.00)
5000 - FAMILY SERVICES	5038 - HOMELESS SERVICES CONTINUUM-INDIVIDUALS	HC45 - HSC-STREET OUTREACH	0050 - SUBSIDIES AND TRANSFERS	One-time enhancement to support Homeless Street Outreach supported by a transfer in from the Committee on Facilities and Procurement.	One-Time	100,000.00
5000 - FAMILY SERVICES	5038 - HOMELESS SERVICES CONTINUUM-INDIVIDUALS	HC45 - HSC-STREET OUTREACH	0050 - SUBSIDIES AND TRANSFERS	One-time enhancement to support increased funding for Homeless Street Outreach.	One-Time	58,000.00
				<b>LOCAL FUNDS TOTAL</b>		<b>860,217.64</b>

#### b. Fiscal Year 2021 Capital Budget Recommendations

The Committee recommends **approval** of the Mayor's proposed FY2021 capital budget for the Department of Human Services.

#### c. Policy Recommendations

1. The Committee supports all efforts made by the District to aggressively pursue and creatively allocated federal funds to cover costs associated with the current public health emergency and the subsequent recovery. In the short-term, aggressive pursuit of federal funds should be focused on the immediate reduction in density within congregate shelters, the expansion of testing, and increased investment in rental assistance.
2. During the public health emergency, the District has reduced barriers to accessing public benefits like SNAP, TANF, and Alliance. These efforts have included the launch of an online portal and app for public benefits<sup>158</sup> and implementing temporary increases to SNAP benefits<sup>159</sup> for households receiving less than the maximum benefit amount. The Administration also temporarily authorized automatic renewal of these various benefit programs to ensure families are able to social distance without fear of losing critical supports.<sup>160</sup> However, all of the waivers about enrollment and renewal, as well as the increases to certain benefits are up to the whim of the federal government and/or contingent on the continuation of the Mayor's declaration of a public health emergency. The Committee is concerned that the end of the public health emergency could result in a benefits cliff for many and recommends that that DHS begin engagement with Council and relevant stakeholders early to ensure that an exit ramp is put in place that takes advantage of the newly created technology and automation.
3. With the highest per capita incarceration rate of any state in the US,<sup>161</sup> it has been found that returning citizens to the District make up one of the largest inflows into the homeless services continuum for unaccompanied adults. The Committee recommends that the agency collaborate with stakeholders, ICH, and other sister agencies to develop a program to help administer re-entry planning for incarcerated DC residents. Furthermore, the Committee believes that ending mass incarceration should be seen as a critical path to ending chronic homelessness.
4. Every year, some number of individuals are denied ERAP because funds are depleted by the end of the year. While DHS tracks denials due to a lack of funds, it was suggested at the Budget Oversight Hearing that the reported numbers may not account for individuals who are prevented from applying because a provider stopped scheduling appointments due to a lack of funds. The Committee recommends that DHS develop a policy and guidance for all ERAP providers to track all instances in which ERAP is denied due to lack of funding, whether or not a formal appointment is scheduled.

<sup>158</sup> The DC Benefits Portal, available at <https://dcbenefits.dhs.dc.gov/>.

<sup>159</sup> See, Curt Campbell, *DC Provides Temporary SNAP Increases to Meet Nutritional Needs*, April 7, 2020, available at <https://www.makingjusticereal.org/dc-provides-temporary-snap-increases-to-meet-nutritional-needs>.

<sup>160</sup> See, Department of Human Services, *Quick Reference to DHS Modified Services during COVID-19 Emergency*, available [https://dhs.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/dhs/service\\_content/attachments/DHS%20Modified%20Operations%20one-pager\\_v3\\_5-15-2020\\_FIN\\_0.pdf](https://dhs.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/dhs/service_content/attachments/DHS%20Modified%20Operations%20one-pager_v3_5-15-2020_FIN_0.pdf).

<sup>161</sup> "States of Incarceration: The Global Context 2018," Peter Wagner and Wendy Sawyer. Prison Policy Initiative. June 2018. Available at <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/global/2018.html>.



## B. OFFICE OF DISABILITY RIGHTS

### 1. AGENCY MISSION AND OVERVIEW

The mission of the Office of Disability Rights (“ODR”) is to ensure that every program, service, benefit, and activity operated or funded by the District of Columbia is fully accessible to, and usable by, qualified people with disabilities, with or without reasonable accommodations or modifications.

ODR is responsible for oversight of the District’s obligations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”), as well as other federal and local disability rights laws. ODR provides technical assistance, training, informal dispute resolution, policy guidance, and expertise on disability rights issues to District agencies and disability community. ODR coordinates the ADA compliance efforts of all District agencies and works with agency ADA coordinators to ensure that the District is responsive to the needs of the disability community and employees with disabilities.

ODR operates through the following 2 programs:

**Disability Rights** – promotes the accessibility of District of Columbia government programs and services for individuals with disabilities by coordinating and overseeing a District-wide compliance program.

This program contains the following 6 activities:

- **Operations** – provides overall direction, leadership, and coordination of, and guidance on, activities related to the centralized administrative support system; establishes procedures and protocols for unified operations within the agency; and assists in facilities management;
- **Training and Technical Assistance** – provides ongoing training and technical assistance to the agency’s ADA coordinators and personnel;
- **Public Information and Outreach** – provides information through published literature, and provides assistance and referrals to individuals who have questions about disability rights or are experiencing obstacles to receiving services;
- **Evaluation and Compliance** – evaluates the District’s compliance with the ADA, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and the disability rights provisions of the Human Rights Act; reports deficiencies to the Office of Human Rights; makes recommendations for addressing deficiencies to the Mayor; and coordinates, facilitates, and supports the Mayor’s Committee on Persons with Disabilities;
- **Investigations** – provides informal dispute resolution into actions or inactions of agencies in alleged violation of the ADA, the District of Columbia Disability Rights Protection Act, and other disability-related civil rights legislation; and



- **State Developmental Disabilities Council (“DDC”)** – houses the District of Columbia Developmental Disabilities Council (“DDC”) and the D.C. Commission on Persons with Disabilities (“DCCPD”). The DDC is a Mayoral appointed body established in accordance with the mandates of the D.C. Developmental Disabilities Basic State Grant Program. It is an independent, community-based advisory committee funded by the Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. It is charged with identifying and addressing the most pressing needs of people with developmental disabilities in the District. The DCCPD advocates on behalf of persons with disabilities and their families to promote inclusive communities and service delivery systems and to provide opportunities for public input, outreach, and education. The DCCPD also facilitates ODR’s collaboration with the Office of Human Rights, the Department of Disability Services, and all other agencies, boards, and commissions of the District of Columbia that affect the lives of residents with disabilities to comprehensively implement ADA compliance and training programs.

**Agency Management** – provides for administrative support and the required tools to achieve operational and programmatic results. This program is standard for all agencies using performance-based budgeting.

## 2. FISCAL YEAR 2021 OPERATING BUDGET

### Proposed Operating Budget Summary

Fund Type	FY2019 Actual	FY2020 Approved	Mayor's FY 2021 Proposed	Committee Variance	Committee Approved	Percent Change
LOCAL FUND	\$123,037,128	\$138,251,105	\$131,048,076		\$131,048,076	-5.2%
FEDERAL GRANT FUND	\$29,514,362	\$31,879,590	\$33,233,191		\$33,233,191	4.2%
FEDERAL MEDICAID PAYMENTS	\$14,017,436	\$12,500,621	\$14,513,225		\$14,513,225	16.1%
SPECIAL PURPOSE REVENUE FUNDS ('O'TYPE)	\$12,504,195	\$7,710,291	\$14,754,614		\$14,754,614	91.4%
OPERATING INTRA-DISTRICT FUNDS	\$307,806	\$49,677	\$0		\$0	-100.0%
<b>TOTAL GROSS FUNDS</b>	<b>\$179,380,927</b>	<b>\$190,391,284</b>	<b>\$193,549,107</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$193,549,107</b>	<b>1.7%</b>

Comptroller Source Group	FY 2019 Actuals	FY 2020 Approved	Mayor's FY 2021 Proposed	Committee Variance	Committee Approved	Percent Change
11-REGULAR PAY - CONT FULL TIME	\$1,114,328	\$1,143,771	\$1,161,298		\$1,161,298	1.5%
13-ADDITIONAL GROSS PAY	\$2,095	\$0			\$0	0.0%
14-FRINGE BENEFITS - CURR PERSONNEL	\$238,718	\$265,355	\$268,828		\$268,828	1.3%
15-OVERTIME PAY	\$17	\$0			\$0	0.0%
20-SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS	\$3,419	\$11,200	\$10,960		\$10,960	-2.1%
40-OTHER SERVICES AND CHARGES	\$289,280	\$397,905	\$393,687		\$393,687	-1.1%
41-CONTRACTUAL SERVICES - OTHER	\$294,744	\$294,078	\$252,626		\$252,626	-14.1%
70-EQUIPMENT & EQUIPMENT RENTAL	\$11,481	\$18,380	\$18,336		\$18,336	-0.2%
<b>TOTAL GROSS FUNDS</b>	<b>\$1,954,081</b>	<b>\$2,130,688</b>	<b>\$2,105,734</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$2,105,734</b>	<b>-1.2%</b>

Program	FY2019 Actual	FY2020 Approved	Mayor's FY 2021 Proposed	Committee Variance	Committee Approved	Percent Change
1000 - AGENCY MANAGEMENT	\$558,392	\$580,086	\$597,646		\$597,646	3.0%
2000 - DISABILITY RIGHTS	\$1,395,689	\$1,550,603	\$1,508,088		\$1,508,088	-2.7%
<b>TOTAL GROSS FUNDS</b>	<b>\$1,954,081</b>	<b>\$2,130,688</b>	<b>\$2,105,734</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$2,105,734</b>	<b>-1.2%</b>

### Committee Analysis and Comments

The Committee is pleased that the FY2021 proposed budget for the Office of Disability Rights' ("ODR") reflects a continued commitment to ensuring compliance with federal and local disability rights laws, including the continuation of the Five-Year State Plan for fiscal years 2017 through 2021. The Committee recognizes that the Developmental Disabilities Council ("DDC") will be developing the implementation on the new Five-Year State Plan for fiscal years 2022-2026. ODR has stated that the proposed goals and outcomes described in the State Plan will be based on extensive community outreach activities conducted by the DDC. These activities will include: (1) development of a needs assessment; (2) conducting multiple community forums & focus groups, and (3) disseminating surveys to District residents with developmental disabilities, family

members, and other community stakeholders representing all 8 wards. DDC is fully funed by the federal government and required to complete the Five-Year State Plan using those funds. The Committee looks forward to working with ODR to ensure the outreach activities are successful in collecting the necessary information.

### **3. FISCAL YEAR 2021 CAPITAL BUDGET**

The Mayor has no proposed FY2021 – FY2026 capital budget for the Office of Disability Rights.

### **4. COMMITTEE BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **a. Fiscal Year 2021 Operating Budget Recommendations**

The Committee recommends **approval** of the FY2021 operating budget for the Office of Disability Rights as proposed by the Mayor.

#### **b. Policy Recommendations**

1. In the FY2019 budget report, the Committee recognized that the FY2018 recommendation, to assess and create a plan for bringing the District of Columbia Public Charter Schools (“DCPCS”) into compliance with applicable federal and local disability rights laws, was not implemented due to turnover in leadership at ODR. At its FY2020 Budget Oversight Hearing, ODR stated that they believe each public charter school is individually responsible for complying with disability rights laws. The Committee recommends again, as it did in the FY2020 budge report, that ODR work more directly with OSSE and individual public charter schools to bring their facilities in compliance.

### **III. COMMITTEE ACTION AND VOTE**

### **IV. ATTACHMENTS**

- A. Child and Family Services Agency Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Oversight Hearing Witness List and Testimony.
- B. Department on Disability Services Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Oversight Hearing Witness List and Testimony.
- C. Department of Human Services Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Oversight Hearing Witness List and Testimony.