GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Child and Family Services Agency

Child and Family Services Agency
Responses to Follow-up Questions
FY24-25 Performance Oversight Hearing
Committee on Youth Affairs
February 27, 2025

1. <u>**Social Worker Salaries**</u>
What is the average salary offered for social workers (vacancies)?
The Child and Family Services Agency's (CFSA) salaries for social workers start at $72,000 and can go up to $118,000 depending on years of experience; average salary is $99,000.

2. <u>**Annual Reports to Council**</u>
Which required reports do you recommend the Council to eliminate?
CFSA is in the process of reviewing the requirements for our annual reports and will provide an update when a recommendation is made.

3. <u>**Contracts**</u>
Regarding two vendors that had unsatisfactory service, why weren't both contracts terminated immediately?
- All-in-1 is the contractor CFSA currently uses to wash and detail its fleet vehicles, particularly for biohazardous situations. After discovering the contractor was not adhering to their contract terms, CFSA initially planned to terminate the agreement. However, recognizing the need for an alternate contract in place, CFSA opted to fulfill the terms of the current contract year. CFSA has issued a solicitation and is on track to contract with a new vendor when the current contract expires.
- Courtney's House provides services to youth ages 11-20 who are either confirmed victims of Commercial Sexual Exploited (CSE) or youth who are at risk of CSE. CFSA continued the contract even though Courtney's House missed the initial due date for proposals because they are the sole provider in the area for certain services.
  Courtney's House provides the following services to youth:
  - Drop-In Center – provides youth a safe space to receive services to include food, clothing, shower, and counseling
  - 24-hour Crisis Intervention
  - Client Service plan development
  - Trauma informed individual and group counseling
  - Participate in and attend At-Risk Review meetings
  - Attend Hope Court hearings to provide updates and recommendations
  - Participate and attend case staffings or team meetings regarding a youth being served
  - Collaborate with the client social workers to advise and report concerns
  - Liaison with the Metropolitan Police Department for client safety interventions

- o Participate in client Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility (PRTF) discharge meetings as needed
- o Emergency transportation services to clients via Uber or Metro cards
- o In-service training to educate stakeholders on CSEC

4. <u>Placement</u>
What is the assessment of the current placement rate for children in the system?
The chart below reflects placement changes that have occurred in the last several years.

Fiscal Year	Number of Placement Changes	Number of Placement Changes by Agency (CFSA/NCCF/PSI Family Services)
FY20	693	N/A
FY21	614	N/A
FY22	537	N/A
FY23	496	CFSA: 260 National Center for Children and Family_ I: 200 PSI Services: 9 Lutheran Social Services: 27 Total: 496
FY24	547	CFSA: 324 National Center for Children and Family_ I: 188 PSI Services: 10 Lutheran Social Services: 25 Total: 547
FY25 1st Qtr.	548	CFSA: 321 National Center for Children and Family_ I: 191 PSI Services: 10 Lutheran Social Services: 26 Total: 548

Notes:
1) The universe of this report is all children who were in placement on the last day of the Fiscal Year.
2) Number of placement episodes is calculated between Start of Fiscal Year or Date entered care whichever is later and the last day of Fiscal Year.
3) Placements starting and ending same day are not counted as placements.
4) Placement types of Hospital (Non-Paid), Abscondence, College and Respite Care are not included in the count of placements.

CFSA conducted a placement stability review in December 2023. The review examined FACES.NET documentation of a statistically significant sample of children (n=92 children) who experienced three or more placement changes in FY 2023. The goal of the review was to identify factors that would improve placement stability. The review found that of the 517 total placement changes, 60% (n=310) were placement disruptions and 25% (n=128 were positive placement changes (moves to a less restrictive environment). Reviewers also found some data quality

concerns with placement change data. In 13% (n=66) of the reported placement changes there was no actual move; instead, temporary respite had been incorrectly documented, there was an administrative change to the service line (such as placement transitioning from being licensed under temporary kinship care license to ongoing license), or it was the child's initial placement in care. For the 310 confirmed placement disruptions, the most prevalent factors (more than one could be selected) that contributed to the disruption included child behavioral concerns (46%, n=142), runaway behaviors (35%, n=107), the provider reported being unwilling/unable to continue the placement (24%, n=73) and child mental health (20%, n=63). Other factors that were reported in fewer than 10% of moves included: child delinquency or incarceration, sex trafficking, and truancy. In 57% of the placement disruptions, reviewers found documentation of attempts to proactively prevent the disruption, which included mental health treatment for the youth (23%), respite (8%), Family Team Meeting or other teaming meeting (8%), mobile crisis services (4%), mentoring (3%), and recreational activities (1%). It is believed that the efforts to prevent placement disruptions are under documented, and the prevalence of documentation in the FY 2023 review was an improvement over the FY 2022 review, when documentation of efforts to prevent disruptions was identified in 34% of the disruptions. There are systemic challenges to accurate and comprehensive documentation in CFSA's current SACWIS system, FACES, to include multiple people documenting efforts in multiple parts of the case record. CFSA has taken the need for more comprehensive documentation on factors leading to placement instability into account in the design of the new CCWIS system, STAAND. The launch of a new information management system, STAAND, projected in April 2025, will bring significant improvements to how CFSA documents and gathers placement data (number of moves, reasons, etc.), as well as streamline and coordinate placement efforts (requests, support/stabilization, etc.) across and among the team of people who do this work (CFSA's Response to Question 167b).

5. **Key Performance Indicators**
Strategic Objective #1: Narrowing the Front Door focuses on children having the opportunity to grow up with their families and that families are separated only when necessary to keep children safe. The agency selected indicators that reflect CFSA's practice and its community support/services to promote children safely remaining with their families.

KPIs:
- *Closed CPS investigations rated as having acceptable quality* is a review of FACES.NET documentation, of completed CPS investigations that determine if the quality of services and supports provided by CFSA was acceptable. The review is completed twice annually to determine investigation quality and provide recommendations for strategies of improvement if needed. This indicator was named "Increase acceptable quality of CPS investigations" in previous CFSA Mayor's Plans.
- *New entries into foster care* focus on children entering foster care throughout the fiscal year for the first time.
- *Number of removals from open in-home cases* indicator report children entering foster care from CFSA's In Home Services Administration. This strategy focuses on children remaining with their families. This indicator was named "Number of removals from In-Home within one year" in previous plans.

The following indicators report about services and support given to families through their engagement with CFSA and the collaboratives:

- *Families without substantiated report(s) of abuse/neglect for up to six months post-case closure with the Collaboratives* indicator follows families for six months after their case closes with the Collaboratives. CFSA conducts a review of these cases to determine if the families have any substantiated reports of abuse or neglect with the agency during this timeframe.
- *211 calls successfully connected to relevant DC social services* indicator provides the total 211 calls that resulted in a service request and was closed successfully by a call agent after connecting to the requested service.
- *Clients who express high level of satisfaction (4+ stars) after service navigation, linkage to community responders, and completion of community response* indicator measures clients' responses on their completed post-211 service navigation or community response service survey. Responses are collected via SurveyMonkey and administered either after a 211 Warmline call or following a community response case closure.
- *Clients who report higher levels of well-being (Cantril's Ladder, which is a satisfaction tool) after service navigation, linkage or completion* indicator is measured by clients who report a higher level of well-being on their completed post-community response service survey.
- *Referrals accepted/rejected within three business days when supportive services for the Front Yard population are through CFSA/Office of Thriving Families (OTF) funded organizations (through Family Success Centers, 211 or Collaborative walk-ins)* measures the responsiveness of the referral process for supportive services for CFSA's Front Yard population. It specifically focuses on the percentage of referrals that are either accepted or rejected within three business days.

Strategic Objective #2: Foster Care as a Temporary Safe Haven focuses on foster care being a temporary safe haven, with planning for permanence beginning the day a child enters foster care.

KPIs:
- *Percentage of foster care placements within the District of Columbia* reflects the agency's desire to keep children geographically close to their families of origin.
- *Percentage of placements in family foster homes* reports all foster care children living in the most family-like setting and reflects the importance of children being raised by consistent caregivers (rather than group home staff completing shifts at a congregate facility). This includes children residing with kin.
- *Percentage of children who enter foster care and are placed into kinship care within 90 days* focuses on the strategy of exploring kin when a child is facing foster care entry. When children enter foster care, CFSA explores placement with kin first to minimize the trauma both the child and birth parent experience if children are placed in a stranger's home or congregate care setting where they will not have a consistent caregiver.

Strategic Objective #3: Child Well-Being supports the value that every child is entitled to a nurturing environment that supports healthy growth and development, good physical and mental health, and academic achievement while in foster care.

KPIs:
- *Percentage of children in foster care receiving a full medical evaluation within 60 days of placement and Percentage of children receiving a full dental evaluation within 60 days of placement* monitors CFSA's performance in providing health services and support immediately to children upon their foster care entry. This also assists with appropriate case management to address children's needs.

The following indicators focus on older children in foster care and CFSA's support with ensuring children gain the skills needed for adulthood.
- *Percentage of youth in foster care who graduate from high school* reports the graduation rate for CFSA's high school seniors and GED recipients during the fiscal year. The denominator for this measure consists of all children who are seniors in high school during the fiscal year and children who pass the GED Test. CFSA utilizes this methodology rather than looking at rates of 9th graders who complete high school within a certain timeframe since many youth who start 9th grade while in foster care will exit foster care prior to being expected to complete high school, or they may enter foster care several years after beginning high school.
- *Share of youth in foster care who complete vocational training and/or receive industry certification* reports about CFSA children who enroll in and attend vocational training. These children are followed to determine their engagement and completion rate concerning their vocational training. CFSA supports older youth with vocational training by assisting in identifying programs, advocating for children when needed, and encouraging the completion of vocational training once a child is enrolled.
- *Increase graduation within 5 years for youth who start college while in foster care* focuses on youth who entered college five years prior to the current fiscal year and have completed their college education. Staff in the Older Youth Empowerment Administration under the Office of Wellbeing are assigned to youth to support their academic, social, and financial needs.

Strategic Objective 4: Exit to Positive Permanency focuses on every child and youth exiting foster care as quickly as safely possible for a well-supported family environment or life-long connection. This also reports on older youth having the skills and support for a successful adulthood.

KPIs:
The following indicators report on how and when children exit foster care and support the Federal reporting for the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) data requirements:
- *Children who achieve permanency within 12 months after entry* (Children who enter foster care during a 12-month period).
- *Children who achieve permanency within 12 months of the first day of a 12-month period for children in foster care 12 to 23 months* (as of the first day of the fiscal year).
- *Children who achieve permanency within 12 months of the first day of a 12-month period for children in foster care 24 or more months* (as of the first day of the fiscal year).

- *Increase youth aged 18 years and older to have an employment/internship experience* focuses on foster care youth aged 18 and older having an employment/internship experience during the fiscal year that they're able to maintain and/or begin their career.
- *Increase engagement of youth in after-care services* focuses on preparing older youth to exit foster care successfully and with needed support from CFSA and other community resources.
- *Youth who exit care by aging out with stable housing in place* indicator measures the housing status of children at the time they age out of foster care.

Strategic Objective 5: Create and maintain a highly efficient, transparent, and responsive District government.

KPIs:
The following indicators were created to support and measure the progress of some Strategic Initiatives in FY24:
- *User Stories (i.e., technology requirements) built, tested, and approved for the overall STAAND end product* report CFSA's progress with developing and launching the STAAND system (connected to the STAAND Strategic Initiative)
- *MSS Staff who have completed the required DCHR MSS trainings* report CFSA's MSS staff's progress toward completing required trainings. (connected to the Workforce Well-Being Strategic Initiative)
- *Equity Action Plans Activities initiated for the Keeping DC Families Together (KDCFT) Initiative* report CFSA's progress with the Enhancing Equity through Community-Based Assessment Strategic Initiative.

6. **Warmline Matrix**

211 Warmline System Data Collection

Soft Launch Period

Time of call

Call duration

Wait times

caller transferred to

Caller first and last name

Caller phone #

Whether the caller is calling on behalf of themselves or someone else

Ward #

Service need

Service description

Service track (Information, closed-loop referral, Community response referral)

Now

Time of call

Call duration

Wait times

caller transferred to

Caller first and last name

Caller contact info, including email and phone #

Caller address and Ward #

Caller household composition

Whether the caller was calling on behalf of themselves or someone else

If calling on behalf of someone else, all the same information on the client

Service need and sub-category need

Service description

How the caller heard about the 211 Warmline

How the caller was connected to the services (information, transfer, referral, community response)

The organization that the call agent referred the caller to

If the caller is interested in a follow up call

If/when the follow up call took place

If the caller was connected to the service

7. <u>Education Neglect</u>

For awareness, see attached the Educational Neglect Referral Reporting Form for School Personnel Only.

8. <u>Educational Targets</u>

CFSA began using rational target setting (RTS) upon the exit from the *LaShawn* lawsuit. RTS was developed by Dr. Fotena Zirps. In this methodology, setting the desired level of performance is an intentional exercise that considers both past performance and context, and how much CFSA can devote to improving performance.

The following past performance and context factors are considered:
- Data (past and current performance)
- Benchmarks (performance from other jurisdictions, national data)
- Mandates, requirements
- Agency aspirational goals
- Gaps between past performance and aspirational goals

The factors associated with how much the Agency can devote to improving performance are related to investments that can be made in the following four areas:
- Policy (federal, state, local)
- Resources (dollars, staff, equipment)
- Focus (strategy, priority, mandate)
- Capacity (training, supervision, leadership)

The exercise to assess and discuss these factors assists leadership and stakeholders in understanding what resources are needed to achieve desired outcomes. Further, the methodology recognizes that there may be a gap between the performance level that CFSA desires overall and what is achievable in the near-term. Therefore, performance targets are utilized instead of performance benchmarks, since performance targets can be updated year to year, which allows for a multi-year plan to reach an aspirational performance level. For additional information on how the methodology incorporates these factors, please see Dr. Zirps' 2012 paper.

Utilizing this approach to set performance targets is preferable to a consensus-based approach or a statistical approach. Risks involved in using a consensus-based approach include limits to full consideration of changes in policy, resources, capacity and focus that are needed to impact performance. As a result, the Agency might produce targets that are socially desirable but not realistic, which is demoralizing for staff and can result in performance targets being ignored. Risks involved in using a statistical method include treating every measure the same, which assumes past performance is the only factor that will explain future performance. It ignores the impact of new policy, resources, capacity and focus on performance.

9. <u>Informal Family Planning Arrangements (IFPA)</u>

IFPAs are facilitated by CFSA. Since the family makes the decision regarding the care of their children, parental consent is required for all IFPAs and memorialized and documented within

CFSA's FACES system. The chart below reflects the number of IFPAs that have existed during the past several years.

Fiscal Year	#
FY22	4
FY23	4
FY24	2
FY 25 to date	0

10. <u>Aging Out</u>
Family Unification Program (FUP) Vouchers

The District of Columbia Housing Authority (DCHA) did not terminate any of the youth whose three-year term expired and instead granted an additional two-year extension to them to continue housing because they had children under 6 years old in their households. There were only three youths identifying in FY 2024 that met the criteria for this extension.

There are currently seven additional youth that are approaching the three years in FY 2025 that will be reviewed to determine if they are eligible for an extension.

HUD has set specific criteria that the youth are required to meet to receive extensions beyond the three-year term as listed below:

1. Youth is participating in the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) program;
2. Youth is participating in Education, Workforce Development, and/or employment activities; and/or
3. Youth is responsible for the care of a dependent child 6 years and under or an incapacitated person.

All the above criteria must be verified by DCHA and/or DCHA must be provided with supporting documentation to verify any of the above to approve the grant extension.