

REPORT ON CHILD WELFARE CASELOAD DATA

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

Completed pursuant to the 2023 Joint Chairmen's Report, pages 141-142

February 6, 2024

REPORT REQUIREMENT

This report is hereby submitted in response to the following reporting requirement found in the 2023 Joint Chairmen's Report:

The committees believe that maintaining an adequate child welfare workforce is essential to improving outcomes for children entering the State's care. Therefore, in order to maintain oversight of this important issue, the committees request that the Department of Human Services (DHS) report to the committees on the number of cases and positions required based on the caseload to meet the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) caseload standards, by jurisdiction, for the following caseload types current within 70 days:

- *intake screening;*
- *child protective investigation;*
- *consolidated in-home services;*
- *interagency family preservation services;*
- *services to families with children – intake;*
- *foster care;*
- *kinship care;*
- *family foster care;*
- *family foster homes – recruitment and new applications;*
- *family foster homes – ongoing and licensing;*
- *adoption;*
- *interstate compact for the placement of children; and*
- *caseworker supervision.*

The committees also request that DHS discuss specific actions taken by the department and local departments of social services to reallocate positions, including the number of positions reallocated by type (caseworker or supervisor) between jurisdictions and identifying the jurisdictions that these positions were transferred from and to, in order to ensure that all jurisdictions can meet the standards for both caseworkers and supervisors. Specifically, DHS should discuss efforts to fill vacant positions in jurisdictions that had shortfalls in caseworker and supervisor positions, including Baltimore and Prince George's counties, which had the largest shortfalls for caseworker positions among jurisdictions as of September 1, 2022. Additionally, the committees request that DHS provide an update on efforts to fill vacant supervisor and caseworker positions in Baltimore City, which had the greatest number of total vacant supervisor and caseworker positions as of September 1, 2022.

In addition to caseload data, the committees also request that the report contain an update on the status of work done by CWLA to implement new workload standards for child welfare and the efforts by DHS to improve recruitment and retention of caseworkers.

Source: 2023 Joint Chairmen's Report, pages 141-142.

REPORT

The enclosed report is based on the child welfare caseload monthly averages over the 12-month period of September 2022 to August 2023. The data is derived from the Child, Juvenile, and Adult Management System (CJAMS) and the Department of Budget and Management's Workday system. As reported in previous years, the in-home caseloads continue to reflect the consolidation of several categories of in-home services based on Maryland's family-centered policy and practice, as well as statewide implementation of Alternative Response.

Both the caseload and position data shown in the Appendix are the most current available. The total number of needed child welfare worker and supervisor positions is 1,144.2 (953.5 child welfare workers and 190.7 supervisors). The total number of filled child welfare worker and supervisor positions is 1,264 (1,042 child welfare workers and 222 supervisors). Based on the actual numbers, state-wide there are 10% more filled positions than needed positions.

REALLOCATION OF POSITIONS

The metropolitan LDSSs continue to be most impacted by caseworker and supervisor vacancies. Baltimore County, Baltimore City, and Prince George's County have the largest gap between positions filled and the number needed according to the CWLA caseload standard; both in terms of actual positions and percentage of positions not filled. There was no reallocation recommended in the 2022 report.

By April 15, 2024, the Department will evaluate the current caseload data and trends to determine if a reallocation of staff is required. DHS will also monitor staffing ratios for the local departments to ensure they have adequate workers and supervisors to meet the overall standards established by CWLA.

RECRUITMENT EFFORTS

The Department is aggressively working to fill vacant positions. In order to increase the number of Child Welfare Caseworkers, the Department worked with the Department of Budget and Management to increase the base hiring step for these positions. Specifically, effective November 1, 2022, all Social Work Supervisors are hired at step 17; Social Worker I and II are hired at step 11; and Family Services Caseworkers, Family Services Caseworker Supervisors, and Casework Specialists are hired at step 8. In order to retain staff, all staff in the above-referenced classifications that were below the new base step had their compensation increased to the new base step. In 2022/2023 the Department used the following recruitment efforts: job fairs, newspaper postings, online postings and social media. During this reporting period, DHS also focused on training such as Coach Approach, Coach Mentor Certification, and Adaptive Leadership to assist with staff support and retention.

Baltimore County and Baltimore City are experiencing a large number of vacancies and are making additional recruitment efforts including attending career fairs across the State and strategic direct mailers to prospective candidates. Significant market pressures and competition for licensed social workers, as well as a decade-long decline in graduating master level social workers¹ negatively impact hiring in the social worker I and II series. In response, Baltimore County DSS reclassified some positions from the Social Worker series to those for unlicensed caseworkers which have been easier to fill. Baltimore County is developing long term plans to encourage the unlicensed hires to earn additional education or credentials to become licensed.

DHS has long-standing partnerships with Morgan State University, Salisbury University, and the University of Maryland, Baltimore through the Title IV-E Work Study Program. The program's mission is to prepare students for social work practice within public child welfare programs. It provides stipends to offset tuition costs and offers specialized child welfare education leading to a Master of Social Work degree (MSW). As a result of the program, local departments hire MSW graduates each academic year to fill open positions. In 2023, DHS hired 50 Title IV-E graduates across the 24 local departments.

STATUS OF WORK DONE BY CWLA TO IMPLEMENT NEW WORKLOAD STANDARDS FOR CHILD WELFARE AND THE STATUS OF EFFORTS BY DHS TO COMPLETE A WORKLOAD STUDY

The Department is reporting caseload data using the CWLA caseload ratios developed in 2000, as required by current Maryland Family Law §5–1310. Recently, CWLA recognized that maintaining caseload ratios alone is not sufficient, and the workload associated with the cases should also be taken into account. CWLA is currently working to update its standards to include workload standards, shifting the focus from caseload standards (identifying the number of cases a worker should be responsible for) to workload standards (measuring the amount, complexity, and intensity of work associated with an assigned caseload).

CWLA engaged several states, including Maryland, to assist in developing the child welfare workload analysis model. CWLA is partnering with Amazon Web Services (AWS). CWLA and AWS goal is to gather information, analyze data, and develop a tool called the Workload Analysis Calculator. The tool will be used to assess Maryland's child welfare workforce and complete the workload analysis. CWLA's workload analysis plan is still in development with work to date including the identifying the metrics needed to complete a workload assessment, and the available assessment models. As part of the development effort, DHS facilitated workgroups with the Local Departments of Social Services (LDSS) to provide CWLA with a comprehensive list of considerations when completing the plan.

1. CSWE 2021 ANNUAL SURVEY OF SOCIAL WORK PROGRAMS STATISTICS ON SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION IN THE UNITED STATES, Summary Pg 3. <https://www.cswe.org/>

Appendix

CWS Caseloads Using 12 Month Monthly Averages, September 2022 to August 2023

With CWLA Staffing Needs

Minus Non-Caseload Carrying Positions

Jurisdiction Breakdowns		CWS Caseloads Using 12 Month Monthly Averages, September 2022 to August 2023																													
Jurisdiction	Intake - Screening (all referrals)	Intake Vtrs Needed	CPS Response	CPS Invests Vtrs Needed	Consolidated	Interagency Preservati on Services	IFPS Vtrs Needed	Services to Families with Children-Intake	SFC Intake Workers Needed	OOH Placemt (Foster Care)	FC Vtrs Needed	OOH Placemt (Kinship Care)	Kinship Vtrs Needed	Family Foster Homes- Rec/ NewApps	New Homes Vtrs Needed	Family Foster Homes- Ongoing/ Lic	Ongoing Homes Vtrs Needed	Adoption	Adoptn Vtrs Needed	ICPC	ICPC Vtrs Needed	Total Workers Needed	Total Filled Workers	Total Sups Needed	Total Filled Sups	Total All CVS Need	Total CV Direct Service Filled Positions	Difference Over (Under) Direct Service Filled	Vacancies		
CWLA Recommended	1:12			1:12			1:6		1:20		1:12		1:12		1:14		1:36		1:10		1:20				1:5						
Allegany	139	11	44	36	43	3.6	0.5	24	12	68	5.6	21	11.9	1	0.1	18	0.5	1	0.1	2	0.1	28.4	29.0	5.7	6.0	34.0	35.0	1.0	0		
Anne Arundel	535	4.4	233	19.4	127	10.6	24	4.0	72	3.6	116	9.6	12	10	2	0.1	71	2.0	1	0.1	12	0.6	55.4	69.0	11.1	18.0	68.5	87.0	20.5	9	
Baltimore	422	4.9	411	34.3	175	14.6	2.2	22	99	5.0	591	49.3	166	13.8	9	0.6	96	2.7	4	0.4	15	0.8	128.4	95.0	25.7	24.0	154.1	19.0	(35.1)	27	
Calvert	73	0.6	55	4.6	19	1.6	3	0.5	11	0.6	46	3.9	5	0.4	1	0.1	17	0.5	1	0.1	2	0.1	12.9	18.0	2.6	5.0	15.4	23.0	7.6	2	
Carroll	46	0.4	30	2.5	42	3.5	0	0.0	14	0.7	27	2.3	5	0.4	0	0.0	13	0.4	0	0.0	1	0.1	10.1	19.0	2.0	5.0	12.1	24.0	11.9	0	
Carroll	182	1.5	81	6.6	51	4.3	7	1.2	21	1.1	31	2.6	5	0.4	1	0.1	14	0.4	0	0.0	4	0.2	18.4	17.0	3.7	6.0	22.1	23.0	0.9	2	
Cecil	188	1.5	100	8.3	53	4.4	0	0.0	19	1.0	118	9.9	4	0.3	3	0.2	44	1.2	2	0.2	5	0.3	27.3	24.0	5.5	8.0	32.7	32.0	(0.7)	12	
Charles	122	1.0	108	9.0	41	3.4	7	1.2	10	0.5	25	2.1	2	0.2	1	0.1	20	0.6	0	0.0	8	0.4	18.4	28.0	3.7	7.0	22.1	35.0	12.9	2	
Dorchester	58	0.5	35	2.9	22	1.8	0	0.0	7	0.4	32	2.7	7	0.6	0	0.0	8	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	9.0	17.0	1.8	4.0	10.8	21.0	10.2	1	
Frederick	298	2.4	146	12.2	54	4.5	14	2.3	39	2.0	70	5.8	9	0.8	2	0.1	36	1.0	2	0.2	8	0.4	31.7	36.0	6.3	9.0	38.1	45.0	6.9	1	
Garrett	28	0.2	32	2.7	26	2.2	0	0.0	4	0.2	51	4.3	5	0.4	1	0.1	24	0.7	1	0.1	2	0.1	10.9	15.0	2.2	2.0	13.1	17.0	3.9	0	
Harford	308	2.5	227	18.9	64	5.3	5	0.8	30	1.5	210	17.5	37	3.1	4	0.3	62	1.7	1	0.1	4	0.2	52.0	55.0	10.4	10.0	62.4	65.0	2.6	0	
Howard	221	1.8	149	12.4	55	4.6	23	3.8	13	0.7	87	7.3	12	1.0	1	0.1	14	0.4	0	0.0	4	0.2	32.2	35.0	6.4	4.0	38.7	39.0	0.3	2	
Kent	15	0.1	13	1.1	8	0.7	0	0.0	3	0.2	10	0.8	1	0.1	0	0.0	18	0.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	3.5	5.0	0.7	3.0	4.1	8.0	3.9	0	
Montgomery*	582	4.8	412	34.3	64	5.3	1	0.2	5	0.3	350	28.1	72	6.0	6	0.4	137	3.8	3	0.3	4	0.2	105.3	102.0	21.1	22.0	126.4	124.0	(2.4)	27	
Prince George's	647	5.3	445	37.1	65	5.4	34	5.7	29	14	464	38.6	81	6.8	4	0.3	141	3.9	1	0.1	15	0.8	10.9	8.0	10	2.0	61	11.9	4.9	1	
Queen Anne's	31	0.3	21	1.8	13	1.1	0	0.0	5	0.3	15	1.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	17	0.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	5.1	8.0	1.0	2.0	6.1	20.2	10.0	(0.2)	10
St. Mary's	111	0.9	56	4.7	38	3.2	8	1.3	12	0.6	63	5.3	9	0.8	0	0.0	3	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.1	16.9	19.0	3.4	1.0	20.2	20.0	0.0	0	
Somerset	37	0.3	40	3.3	54	4.5	1	0.2	26	1.3	20	1.6	1	0.1	0	0.0	19	0.5	0	0.0	3	0.2	11.3	16.0	2.4	3.0	14.3	19.0	4.7	0	
Talbot	39	0.3	18	1.5	12	1.0	0	0.0	6	0.3	15	1.2	1	0.1	0	0.0	12	0.3	0	0.0	2	0.1	4.8	16.0	1.0	4.0	5.8	20.0	14.2	0	0
Washington	262	2.1	227	19.0	68	5.6	8	1.3	45	2.3	121	10.1	12	1.0	0	0.0	36	1.0	0	0.0	8	0.4	42.8	60.0	8.6	10.0	51.3	70.0	18.7	2	
Wicomico	200	1.6	95	7.9	38	3.2	0	0.0	36	18	26	2.1	3	0.3	2	0.1	13	0.4	0	0.0	4	0.2	17.6	35.0	3.5	5.0	21.1	40.0	18.9	2	
Worcester	66	0.5	52	4.3	63	5.3	0	0.0	9	0.5	23	1.9	3	0.3	0	0.0	6	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1	12.9	16.0	2.6	4.0	15.5	20.0	4.5	0	
Total Counties	4610	39.2	3030	252.5	1194	99.5	151	25.2	538	26.9	2578	214.9	473	49.6	38	2.7	839	23.3	17	17	105	5.3	0.0	656.0	734.0	131.2	163.0	787.2	897.0	109.8	100
Baltimore City	539	4.9	854	712	420	35.0	5	0.8	117	5.3	1543	128.6	481	40.1	24	1.7	278	7.7	8	0.8	16	0.8		297.5	308.0	59.5	59.0	357.0	367.0	10.0	129
Total State	5209	44.1	3884	323.7	1614	134.5	156	26.0	655	32.8	4121	343.5	954	89.7	62	4.4	1117	310	25	25	121	6.1	0.0	953.5	1042.0	190.7	222.0	1144.2	1264.0	119.8	229
Source:	Screening report from Intake	Beginning + New cases #/2	Beginning + New cases #/2	Monthly Average (StateStat)	Monthly Average (StateStat)	Monthly Average (StateStat)	Monthly Average - Excludes Plan of Adoption (StateStat 03)	Monthly Average - Excludes Plan of Adoption (StateStat 03 file)	Monthly Average (StateStat 06 file)	Monthly Average (StateStat 03 file)	Monthly Average (ICPC Data4)	Monthly Average (ICPC Data4)	HRDT Workday October 2023 data																		

*Note: Montgomery County's positions are county positions, not State positions and are not reported here.