

Management Audit of the Department of Family and Children's Services

**Prepared for the
Board of
Supervisors of
the County of
Santa Clara by
the
Management
Audit Division**

**County
Administration
Building**

**East Wing
10th Floor
70 W. Hedding St.
San Jose, CA
95110**

(408) 299-6436

October 10, 2013

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County of Santa Clara

Board of Supervisors

County Government Center, East Wing
70 West Hedding Street
San Jose, California 95110-1770
(408) 299-6436 FAX 299-5004 TDD 993-8272

Contract Auditor: Harvey M. Rose Associates, LLC
E-mail: roger.mialocq@bos.sccgov.org

October 10, 2013

Supervisor Dave Cortese, Chair
Supervisor Ken Yeager, Vice Chair
Board of Supervisors' Finance and Government Operations Committee
70 West Hedding Street
San Jose, CA 95110

Dear Supervisors Cortese and Yeager:

We have completed the Management Audit of the Department of Family and Children's Services. This audit was authorized by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Santa Clara as part of the County's Fiscal Year 2012-13 Management Audit Program, pursuant to the Board's power of inquiry specified in Article III, Section 302(c) of the County Charter. This audit was conducted in conformity with the United States Government Accountability Office (GAO) Audit Standards. The Board of Supervisors selected the audit topic after considering the County-wide audit risk assessment conducted annually by the Management Audit Division in accordance with Board policy.

The purpose of the management audit was to examine the operations, management practices and finances of the Department of Family and Children's Services, and to identify opportunities to increase the Department's efficiency, effectiveness and economy. This report includes seven findings and 30 recommendations. Some recommendations present multiple alternatives for the Board's consideration; as a result, the savings and costs may vary according to which recommendation is adopted. In the attached response to this audit, the Department of Family and Children's Services has expressed agreement with the great majority of the proposed recommendations.

As part of our fieldwork, a survey was conducted of relevant operations in comparable counties. Highlights of survey results are shown as Attachment I.3 of the enclosed report. If the County were to implement the recommendations in this report, \$954,807 annual benefits

Board of Supervisors:

Mike Wasserman
District 1

Cindy Chavez
District 2

Dave Cortese
District 3

Ken Yeager
District 4

S. Joseph Simitian
District 5

County Executive: Jeffrey V. Smith

would be saved or generated for the County, of which approximately \$566,311 is estimated to be General Fund savings. This figure is net of recommended new expenses for critical needs, and may be understated, as the estimated General Fund share of costs is a Department-wide average based on the total FY 2012-13 actual costs.

Implementation of these recommendations would also result in operational efficiencies that would improve the safety and wellbeing of the County's most vulnerable children while also reducing various financial and legal risks. If approved by the Board, these recommendations would:

- Increase the ability of the Department to receive and respond to incoming reports of child abuse and neglect through its emergency hotline by adding call center staff and better matching staffing schedules to correspond with the highest call volume;
- Bring the Department into compliance with State law by responding to all reports, including attempted reports, of abuse and neglect via its emergency call hotline;
- Reduce overtime costs in the Front End bureau by approximately \$500,000 annually through the realignment of staff schedules, caseload standards and work assignments;
- Expedite placement solutions for abused and neglected youth by concentrating placement expertise under one manager;
- Improve management oversight, communication, and overall Departmental responsiveness by balancing managerial spans of control and placing closely-related functions in the same bureaus;
- Improve contract monitoring, oversight and program management of the Department's \$26 million of annual contract expenditures; and
- Generate \$171,000 of federal revenue on an ongoing annual basis and bring the Department into compliance with State law by screening all DFCS youth for Supplemental Security Income eligibility.

In addition to these areas, the Introduction highlights five areas the Department may wish to explore in greater depth in the future, which include:

- Prioritization of the Department's efforts to reduce disproportionality
- Analysis of the impact of the Title IV-E waiver
- Revisions of the Department's Child Fatality Reporting and Investigation Protocol
- Coordination of social worker travel outside of the County of Santa Clara
- Future strategic planning for the Department's four Family Resource Centers

We would like to thank all of the staff and management of the Social Services Agency and Department of Family and Children's Services for their generous and patient assistance to us during this audit. Their cooperative assistance and expertise are greatly appreciated. In addition, we would like to thank the management of the Department of Employment and Benefit Services, Social Services Agency's Financial Management Systems, County Counsel and the Employee Services Agency for assistance with portions of this audit.

Respectfully submitted,



Roger Mialocq
Board of Supervisors Management Audit Manager

cc:

Supervisor Chavez
Supervisor Simitian
Supervisor Wasserman

Project Staff:

Emilyzen Cervantes
Nicole Coburn
Preeti Piplani
Jeff Segol
Cheryl Solov

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Executive Summary

This *Management Audit of Social Services Agency's Department of Family and Children's Services* was authorized by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Santa Clara as part of the County's Fiscal Year 2012-13 Management Audit Program, pursuant to the Board's power of inquiry specified in Article III, Section 302(c) of the County of Santa Clara Charter. The Board of Supervisors selected the audit topic after considering the annual County-wide audit risk assessment conducted by the Management Audit Division in accordance with Board direction. This report includes seven findings, briefly highlighted below.

1. Improving Responsiveness to Reported Child Abuse and Neglect

The Department operates a Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Center to receive referrals of alleged child abuse and neglect. Last fiscal year, the Center received more than 26,000 calls, of which almost 10,000 were referred for investigation. Ultimately, the Court removed about 358 children from their homes as result of these calls. Primarily due to insufficient staff, workers directly answer only about 59 percent of the calls made to the center. The rest either go to voice mail or are not answered. In addition to calls not answered, hundreds of callers hold for an average of 20 minutes, and some wait for more than an hour. Since about one of every 53 calls actually answered or returned from voice mail ultimately results in removal of an abused or neglected child from a dangerous situation by the Court, failure to answer more than 7,000 calls annually results in abused and neglected children remaining in dangerous homes, even as concerned individuals are calling to report these situations. Implementation of recommendations in this report would enable the Department to answer and return incoming reports of child abuse and neglect on a timely basis, ultimately removing more children from dangerous situations.

2. Improving Emergency Response Caseload Standards and Scheduling

Child abuse and neglect reports received by the Department are initially investigated by the Emergency Response (ER) Division. The current labor agreement reduced caseloads from 21 to 14 cases per worker, which is low in comparison to most responding counties surveyed for this audit. Reduced caseloads resulted in cases being handled on overtime, resulting in a 59 percent annual increase in overtime use by the unit, at an additional cost of \$248,000. Furthermore, current scheduling does not optimally match staff to workload. DFCS should meet and confer with labor to increase the caseload standard and adjust work schedules to reduce overtime use.

3. Court Intervention Caseloads and Staffing

In most cases, the Superior Court reviews Department decisions to place a child into protective custody. These reviews are presented to the Court by the Court Intervention (or Dependency Investigations) Division. Due to staff leaves of absence, transfers, and resignations, only an average of 23 Division staff were assigned cases throughout 2012, far less than the 39 positions budgeted. The absences have been backfilled with overtime hours equal to 4.7 Full Time Equivalent positions, at a cost of \$595,000, and social workers from other units. This is \$250,764 more than the cost of overtime in FY 2010-11. Even so, most deadlines for case plans were missed by more than two months. Court report deadlines were missed about eight percent of the time. Implementation of recommendations in this report would reduce overtime use, improve compliance with court timelines, and reduce unit turnover.

4. Receiving, Assessment and Intake Center

The Receiving, Assessment and Intake Center receives children after removal from parental custody due to allegations of child abuse or neglect. Upon arrival, State law gives the Department only 24 hours to place the child in a proper living arrangement. From January 2012 to May 2013, there were 32 instances when children remained at the Center for more than 24 hours. While two-thirds of these youth remained at the Center less than three days, two youth remained at the center for more than 28 days in 2012. Although the Center is staffed by social workers who work to find placements, the Department's expert placement staff are located elsewhere, and not available to assist Center staff outside of normal business hours. This separation has contributed to delays placing Center children, particularly those with medical or behavioral problems. Children's Counselors provide child care to incoming youth and are present at all times even when the Center is vacant. To better utilize these staff, the audit recommends the deletion of 15 Counselor and two Senior Children's Counselor positions, and the addition of 11 Social Worker I positions as part of the FY 2014-15 budget process. Alternatively, the Department could issue a Request for Proposals to contract out aspects of the Receiving Center function. Implementation of recommendations in this report would both reduce placement delays and save \$547,042 in staffing costs, of which \$130,982 is General Fund savings.

5. Organizational Structure

Excepting the Administration Office, each of the Department's nine other bureaus is managed by a Social Services Program Manager (SSPM) I, II or III. These SSPMs manage as few as three to as many as 12 direct reports. Bureau staffing ranges from 21 to 158 positions. Placing closely-related functions in the same bureaus and balancing managerial spans of control would provide more effective management oversight, streamline communication, and improve the responsiveness to the County's abused and neglected children. In addition, these recommendations would save an estimated \$661,411, of which \$159,104 is General Fund savings.

6. Contract Monitoring and Management

In FY 2012-13, the Department spent \$26 million on approximately 126 contract agreements to provide services to families. These contracts are monitored by various staff for programmatic performance, with technical and fiscal performance monitored by the Social Services Agency's Office of Contract Management. No guidelines or policy manuals exist for contract program monitors, and the intensity of monitoring varies significantly among contracts. The lack of coordinated oversight impedes the Department's ability to meet contract renewal deadlines, and inadequate monitoring also increases the risk that contractors may fail to comply with contract requirements. Implementation of the recommendations in this section would improve contract management and monitoring.

7. Maximizing Federal Revenue for Foster Youth

The County receives federal reimbursement for foster youth eligible for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Services Administration (SSA) survivor benefits, amounting to about \$579,000 annually. Since 2009, State law requires all foster youth between ages 16.5 to 17.5 to be screened for SSI eligibility. As of May 2013, there were at least 152 foster youth between ages 16.5 to 17.5 awaiting screening. Not only is the County out of compliance with State law, the vast majority of other foster youth who are potentially eligible for benefits are also not evaluated. Because an estimated 15 percent of the entire foster youth population of about 1,200 is believed to be eligible for federal funding, the County General Fund is unnecessarily paying for their care. Furthermore, eligibility for federal reimbursement, once established, would potentially continue for many years. Implementation of our recommendations would generate net revenue estimated at \$171,000 per year, and enable the Department to comply with State law.

Introduction

This *Management Audit of Social Services Agency's Department of Family and Children's Services* was authorized by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Santa Clara as part of the County's Fiscal Year 2012-13 Management Audit Program, pursuant to the Board's power of inquiry specified in Article III, Section 302(c) of the County of Santa Clara Charter. The Board of Supervisors selected the audit topic after considering the annual County-wide audit risk assessment conducted by the Management Audit Division in accordance with Board direction.

Purpose and Scope

The purpose of the management audit was to examine the operations, management practices and finances of the Department of Family and Children's Services (DFCS), and to identify opportunities to increase their efficiency, effectiveness and economy.

As part of this management audit, the Management Audit Division conducted more than 80 survey and fieldwork interviews with managers, supervisors and line staff in all divisions of the Department. Some of these interviews included tours of facilities. We also reviewed State and federal laws and regulations, Department policies and procedures, internal management information and other reports related to the operations, and we requested and analyzed data from various information systems. Finally, we conducted a survey of other child protective services agencies in the largest California counties, in order to identify and compare key differences in practices in those counties to the County of Santa Clara.

Audit Methodology

This management audit was conducted under the requirements of Board of Supervisors Policy Number 3.35, as amended on May 25, 2010. That policy states that management audits are to be conducted under Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards issued by the United States Government Accountability Office. This audit complies with the December 2011 revision of those standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

In accordance with these requirements, we performed the following management audit procedures:

- Audit Planning—This management audit was selected by the Board of Supervisors after considering a risk assessment analysis developed by the Management Audit Division at the Board's direction. After audit selection by the Board, a preliminary management audit work plan was developed, and the Board's letter of introduction was provided to the auditee.
- Entrance Conference—An entrance conference was held on September 6, 2012 with the Department of Family and Children's Services Director and other senior staff to introduce the management audit team, describe the management audit program and scope

of review, and respond to questions. The preliminary management audit work plan and a request for background information were also provided at the entrance conference.

- Pre-Audit Survey—Audit staff reviewed documentation and interviewed more than 80 managers, supervisors and line staff to obtain an overview understanding of the Department of Family and Children’s Services, and to isolate areas of operations that warranted more detailed assessments. Based on the pre-audit survey, the work plan for the management audit was refined in early December and again in mid-January.
- Field Work—Field work activities were conducted after completion of the pre-audit survey, and included: (a) additional interviews with managers, supervisors and line staff; (b) tours of facilities; (c) a further review of departmental documents, records and other materials; (d) analyses of data collected manually and electronically from systems; and, (e) surveys of other county agencies to measure performance and to determine organizational and operational alternatives that might warrant consideration by the County of Santa Clara.
- Draft Report—On July 26, 2013, an initial draft report was prepared and provided to DFCS management for their review and feedback.
- Exit Conference—An exit conference was held on August 19, 2013 with the DFCS Director and other staff to collect additional information pertinent to our report, to obtain comments on the report findings, conclusions and recommendations, and to make corrections and clarifications as appropriate. During this time, the report was revised, with each revision provided to Agency management for its review and use in preparing a formal written response.
- Final Report—This final report was prepared and issued on October 10, 2013. The Department’s written response is attached to the final report.

Overview of DFCS Budget, Staffing and Organization

The Department of Family and Children’s Services is one of three departments that comprise the Social Services Agency, the others being the Department of Aging and Adult Services and the Department of Employment and Benefit Services. For Fiscal Year (FY) 2013-14, the Department’s approved budget is approximately \$199.2 million, including a share of support costs provided by the Social Services Agency, with an estimated \$11 million or 5.5 percent coming from County General Fund sources. The Department includes 548 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions, with approximately two-thirds of all staff comprised of social workers and staff providing front-end (Emergency Response and Court Intervention Services) and continuing case maintenance services to families and children in the child welfare system.

The Department is currently organized into 10 bureaus, which include:

- Administration (Executive Management)
- Administration Support

- Child Abuse and Neglect (CAN) Reporting Center
- Front-End Bureau, which includes Emergency Response and Court Intervention Services (Dependency Investigation)
- Receiving, Assessment and Intake Center
- Continuing Services Bureau B
- Continuing Services Bureau C
- Family and Permanency Bureau
- San Jose Family Resource Centers
- South County Services Bureau

Detailed descriptions of each bureau are provided as Attachment 5.1 to the Organizational Structure Finding, and an organizational chart is provided as Attachment 5.4. As of October 2013, the Department was engaged in strategic planning in partnership with the Casey Family Foundation to clarify the mission, vision, values and other guiding principles for the Department. The Department anticipates a draft strategic plan to be available in early 2014.

Description of DFCS Operations

According to the FY 2013-14 Recommended Budget, DFCS is tasked with protecting children from abuse and neglect, promoting their healthy development, and providing services to families which preserve and strengthen their ability to care for their children. The Department provides prevention, intervention, advocacy and public education as it relates to protecting child safety and well-being.

The Department carries out this function under Federal laws and regulations, including the federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act of 1974, the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980, the Omnibus Reconciliation Act of 1993 and the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997, and under State laws and regulations, primarily portions of the California Welfare and Institutions Code, and regulations promulgated by the California Department of Social Services. Varying portions of the cost of most DFCS programs are reimbursed from federal and State funds.

Child Abuse Reporting and Investigation

The Department provides 24-hour, seven-days-a-week response to reports of child abuse and neglect. Such reports may be received from members of the general public, legally-mandated reporters (such as teachers, physicians, etc.) or law enforcement. Social workers performing these functions are first responders to crisis situations in the community, involving child abuse and neglect. Social workers in the Department's Child Abuse and Neglect (CAN) Reporting Center screen reports of abuse or neglect and determine the type of response required based on the seriousness of the circumstances. Investigations may commence within 30 minutes, two hours, or within 10 days of receiving a report.

Social workers in the Emergency Response (ER) Division of the Front-End Bureau respond to the referrals screened by CAN staff. They determine if a child needs to be placed into protective custody or not. If no immediate placement alternative is available, children removed from their

parents or legal guardians may be taken to the Receiving, Assessment and Intake Center, where they receive medical and mental health assessments while an appropriate placement either with a relative or a foster home is identified within 24 hours. If the ER social worker decides that the child should remain with the parents, but be placed under informal supervision or voluntary maintenance oversight by the Department, then the case is assigned to a Continuing social worker in Service Bureau B, Service Bureau C, South County, the Family Resource Centers, or a special unit in Court Intervention.

The Dependent Intake Process

Once ER social workers determine that DFCS investigation is warranted, the social worker must also determine if the child is safe to remain with his/her parents, or whether the child must be removed from the home. If it is believed that a juvenile court action is necessary, the case is assigned to a Dependency Investigations (DI) social worker.

DI social workers investigate the case and determine whether to file a petition of abuse and neglect with the Juvenile Dependency Court. Based on the petition, if the judge decides that the child should be placed into custody, the DI social worker must file reports and attend hearings to determine what will happen to the child and family. If the Court determines the petition allegations to be true, the Court holds a subsequent hearing, called a disposition hearing, to determine how the needs of the child and family should be met, based on recommendations made by the DI social worker, Court Appointed Special Advocates representing the child and attorneys representing the parents and the child. This process is detailed in Attachment I.1. Typically, one of two dispositions is made:

- Family Maintenance, in which the child stays under the parents' care, but remains a dependent of the Court. A case plan is prepared describing services that will be provided to the parent and child, such as counseling, parenting classes, and substance abuse testing, and treatment. The plan includes goals the parents and children must meet. A social worker visits the family monthly, and cases are reviewed every six months to determine if continued dependency status is necessary.
- Family Reunification, in which the child remains in protective custody with a friend, relative or non-relative extended family member, foster home or other placement. The Family and Permanency Bureau is responsible for recruiting licensing and retaining foster homes, group homes and other placement alternatives. A case plan is prepared and includes a description of services to be provided to the parents and children as well as goals that must be met for the parents to reunify with the child(ren). Court-ordered reunification services are typically offered for six months for children ages zero-three years old and for one year for children four years old and above.

In select cases involving statutorily specified instances of abuse or neglect, the Court may decide against reunification services to the parent, and proceed directly to determine a permanent placement for the child and possibly to terminate parental rights.

Continuing Social Workers and Permanent Placement

Once a judge determines whether a family will be placed on either Family Maintenance or Family Reunification, supervision of the family is transferred to what is known as a Continuing social worker. There are two San Jose-based bureaus that specialize in this function, and there are also Continuing workers assigned within the current self-contained South County Bureau. The Continuing worker oversees implementation of the family's case plan, including coordinating any services to be provided to the parents and child, and arranging for visitation between the parents and child, in Family Reunification cases. The social worker visits the parents and child at least monthly, as described above, and prepares reports to the Court on their progress with the case plan. The Continuing worker also investigates any new allegations of abuse and neglect that are made against the parents of the children the worker is overseeing, if the children remained in the home and are under Family Maintenance. However, if new allegations of abuse or neglect emerge regarding youth placed in out-of-home care, then ER social workers will investigate.

If it is ultimately determined that the child and parents cannot be reunified, State law requires a hearing be held to determine a permanent home for the child, which could include termination of parental rights to the child. Based on recommendations from the child's Continuing social worker, options to be considered by the Court include:

- Freeing the child for adoption, which may also include continuing the case for 180 days while an adoptive home is located;
- Guardianship of the child by a relative or foster parent; (the case may either remain open or be closed depending on the circumstance); or,
- Placement of the child in long-term foster care/planned permanent living arrangement.

Adoptions

The preferred permanent placement plan is adoption. Concurrent planning efforts to locate a permanent home are ongoing throughout the case. The Department's Family and Permanency Bureau assumes responsibility for attempting to find an adoptive family if adoption is the permanent plan for the child. Separate units within the Bureau prepare "child referral cards" for children being offered for adoption, and conduct home studies for adoptive homes.

Preventive Programs and Voluntary Services

The Department also provides a number of programs designed to prevent child abuse and neglect. Four Family Resource Centers offer parenting classes and other resources to Department clients in both court-ordered and voluntary programs. One center serves families in South Santa Clara County, and the other three centers are located in San Jose, providing services to the Latino, Asian-Pacific Islander and African Ancestry communities. In addition, the Department offers Differential Response services, which are designed to function as support services to prevent children and families at risk of abuse and neglect before entering the child welfare system, and to support those families exiting the system.

Department Accomplishments

Management audits typically focus on opportunities for improvements within an organization. Some of the current noteworthy achievements of the Department are discussed in Attachment I.2.

Topics Requiring Additional Review

During the course of a management audit, certain issues may be identified which warrant future consideration by the Department or the Board of Supervisors, even though a specific finding is not included in the report. Four such items are presented below.

I. Disproportionality

As part of this management audit, the Board of Supervisors asked that we review the Department's efforts to address the disproportionate representation of certain ethnic, cultural and racial minority groups in the child welfare system. As shown in the table below, data from the Department's 2013 System Improvement Plan (SIP) illustrates a stark contrast between the racial and ethnic composition of the County's child population and the population served by the child welfare system.

**Children Entering the Child Welfare Caseload,
County of Santa Clara: July 2011 – June 2012**

Ethnic/Racial Group Composition	Number of children as percent of total County child Population	Percent of children entering the child welfare population
African Ancestry/ African American	2.2%	9.4%
Asian	30.5%	6.3%
Latino	37.1%	65.0%
Native American	0.2%	0.7%
White	24.1%	18.5%
Unspecified	6.0%	0.2%
Totals	100.0%	100.0%

Source: 2013 System Improvement Plan, Attachment B

Academic research at both the national and international level has documented the overrepresentation of certain racial and ethnic groups in the child welfare system when compared to the general child population. While the extent of overrepresentation varies widely by jurisdiction, the prevalence of disproportionality is neither new nor limited to the County of Santa Clara. The landmark Burgos Consent Decree of 1977 is one of the first federal court cases to address the overrepresentation of Hispanic populations and the adequacy of public child welfare system efforts to meet the needs of Spanish-speaking populations. This federal court

order found the State of Illinois to be in violation of Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and required the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services to provide services in Spanish to Hispanic clients whose primary language is Spanish, translate written forms into Spanish, and place Spanish-speaking youth with Spanish-speaking foster parents. While the Burgos Consent Decree does not directly apply to California, and no similar legal action has yet occurred in California, it offers a useful framework of criteria to assess DFCS' efforts to serve overrepresented populations.

Our research on disproportionality spanned several aspects of Department operations, including the preparation of the County's 2013 SIP, translation and communication efforts to reach non-English speaking populations, bilingual staffing levels, and internal staff training.

Addressing Disproportionality through Strategic Planning and Staff Training

The Department has taken several steps to address the overrepresentation of specific ethnic, racial and cultural minority groups. Perhaps the most visible of these is the 2013 SIP, which has established the goal to:

Address and eliminate the over-representation of African Ancestry and Latino families, as defined as "Within five years African Ancestry and Latino children will be no more likely than other children given the same risk or protective capacity factors, to enter the child welfare caseload or to exit the child welfare system."

According to a California Department of Social Service (CDSS) staff person responsible for assisting the County of Santa Clara and other counties with self-assessments, peer quality case reviews and system improvement plans, Santa Clara County's 2013 SIP is one of the most aggressive plans in the State with regard to addressing disproportionality.

Specific steps comprising the Department's strategy to meet this goal include:

- increasing participation in prevention programs;
- revising mandated reporter training to include education about disproportionality, bias, and the impact of poverty, cultural values and barriers to service;
- conducting priority hiring of staff for positions that are culturally and linguistically proficient to serve over-represented groups in child welfare;
- enhancing parent education support; and,
- establishing an Office of Cultural Competency for Children's Services, which will reside in the Office of the County Executive, to coordinate countywide implementation of policies and programs that address racial and ethnic disparity that exists within County services.

Preparation of the 2013 SIP involved numerous ethnic and cultural groups, including La Raza Roundtable, Latino Child Welfare Equity Project (LCWEP), Black Leadership Kitchen Cabinet, and multiple community-based organizations. This collaborative and participatory-based process represents a substantial change from the 2009 SIP development process, which was largely developed internally by Department management with limited employee and community input.

In addition to the SIP, the Department, since 2007, has prepared and presented an Annual Report and Plan to Reduce Disproportionality in the Child Welfare System to the Board's Children, Seniors', and Family Committee (CSFC), and also hosts a monthly Unified Children of Color Taskforce to coordinate efforts to reduce disproportionality. Such regular reporting has improved data collection and reporting to stimulate research and analysis of Department policies and practice that may contribute to disproportionality. These efforts to track disproportionality data and work collaboratively with community-based organizations and other child welfare stakeholders were the subject of a February 2013 case study by the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, which argued that the Department's efforts could provide a helpful model nationally for other jurisdictions to follow.

DFCS staff receive training throughout the year on multiple topics. From 2009 to 2011, training topics on issues related to disproportionality increased nearly 50 percent, from 29 trainings in 2009 to 45 trainings in 2011. Similarly, the number of trainings with a cultural component more than doubled from 30 sessions in 2009 to 62 in 2011, and discussions of how culture impacts the practice of social work are embedded to all trainings as appropriate. In addition, the County of Santa Clara is one of six federally funded grant recipients that seek to increase permanency for youth, particularly with regard to African Ancestry and Native American youth. This grant, known as California Partners for Permanence (CAPP), emphasizes a practice model based on planned intervention, which emphasizes culturally sensitive-engagement, family-, tribal- and community-based network empowerment and the use of culturally-based and trauma-informed healing practices. By the end of calendar year 2013, all DFCS Continuing units will be trained in the model, which can be extended to any minority group – not only African Ancestry and Native American youth – allowing for greater engagement with all populations that are disparately overrepresented in long-term foster care.

Areas Requiring Targeted Resources

Through the County's SIP and staff trainings, the Department has established a framework to reduce the disproportionate representation of families of color in the child welfare system. To complement and advance these efforts, the Department may wish to consider prioritizing certain aspects of its outreach to both clients and the broader community in order to expedite progress toward its five-year goal.

Using select criteria from the Burgos Consent Decree, audit field work suggests the Department will need to accelerate its efforts in the following areas to ensure that the County is providing appropriate and necessary resources to its diverse client population and is not subject to litigation similar to that which prompted the Burgos Consent Decree. Specifically, audit field work highlights the need for more immediate attention and action by the Department in the following four areas:

- Expanded Form Translation: According to a Department tracking list, 282 forms may be used to process child abuse and neglect referrals and cases. Only 4.6 percent of these forms are translated into Spanish, and 3.2 percent are translated into Vietnamese. Statistics from FY 2011-12 indicate that 66 percent of incoming DFCS clients are of Latino-descent, and 6.3 percent are of Asian-Pacific Islander heritage. While the proportion of these clients who are non-English speaking is unknown, given the overrepresentation of Latino families in the child welfare system, Department management may wish to consider prioritizing staff resources to increase the number of translated forms and printed materials most frequently offered to client families, which may facilitate improved communication and outcomes with non-English speaking clients.

- Improved Case Plan Translation: The Child Welfare System/Case Management System (CWS/CMS) has the ability to establish case plans directly in Spanish. However, in interviews, staff reported that translation issues with the program frequently require correction and clean-up by social workers, which involves additional time and resources by bilingual staff. As discussed below, bilingual social workers are already in high demand within the Department, and additional time spent translating case plans results in less time with clients. As the California Department of Social Services works to deploy its planned new version of CW/CMS, input from the County of Santa Clara regarding shortcomings of the existing translation capabilities could be addressed in the design and execution of the new system.

- Increased Bilingual Foster Home Recruitment: Data from February 2013 shows that the Department maintained a list of 354 licensed County foster homes. However, only 125 of the 354 homes (35 percent) were “placement ready,” meaning these foster homes were ready to receive a child and had no outstanding licensing issues.
 - In the overwhelming majority (85 percent) of available homes, English was the primary language spoken.
 - Spanish was the primary language used in only 9 percent of available placement-ready homes, and Vietnamese was noted as the primary language in only 2 percent of available homes.

These statistics underscore the need for placement-ready foster homes which can mirror the cultural and linguistic needs of incoming DFCS youth. Specific outreach to bilingual homes, coupled with the Department’s participation in the Resource Family Approval Process, a pilot project initiated by the California Department of Social Services seeking to streamline the approval process for relative and non-relative guardians, may help to increase the number of available homes that reflect the cultural and linguistic needs of the DFCS clients.

- Additional Bilingual Staff: Data on bilingual DFCS staff indicate that the number of staff who speak another language decreased from 236 bilingual workers in December 2010 to 209 in December 2011, due to staffing reductions and hiring freezes. However, bilingual staffing levels have since increased to 224 in December 2012. The number of Spanish-speaking social workers showed a similar pattern during the same time periods, decreasing from 165 in 2010 to 140 in 2011, but increasing to 159 in 2012.

To help bolster the number of bilingual social workers, beginning in May 2013, the Department has initiated continuous recruitment for social workers fluent in Spanish, Cantonese and Vietnamese in order to expand bilingual staffing. As further discussed in Section 5 on the Department's Organizational Structure, bilingual social workers are assigned caseloads that are near or above caseload standards per their union contract. In its efforts to address disproportionality, the Department may wish to track the impact of continuous recruitment on bilingual caseloads and the number of monolingual clients served.

II. Title IV-E Waiver

This audit includes findings related to the federal foster care funding reimbursement and placement services for youth in the child welfare system. However, the scope of this audit does not include an assessment of outcomes for youth once placed in out-of-home care. As of September 2013, the County of Santa Clara has stated its intent to consider a waiver of federal foster care funding, derived from Title IV-E of the Social Security Act. Under this program, the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) projects that the total amount of federal funding the County receives for foster care assistance would be increased by approximately 37 percent from base year levels in Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2008-09. As a waiver county, the Department would be able to use the federal dollars it receives to fund alternative services to families, such as targeted resources to support children and families prior to and after exiting the child welfare system.

Under the existing system, funding for child welfare services is primarily funded by the federal government through Title IV-E of the Social Security Act. The County of Santa Clara receives federal reimbursement based on the number of children in out-of-home care. In 1994, Congress granted the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) the authority to approve state demonstration projects that would waive certain requirements of the act, allowing participating jurisdictions the flexibility "to use Federal funds to test innovative approaches to child welfare service delivery and financing." Participating counties forego the traditional open-ended entitlement funding for foster care assistance in exchange for a "capped" amount of federal grant dollars that can be used to provide a variety of programs, including increased preventive and family maintenance services, regardless of whether families meet federal eligibility or placement requirements.

Nationwide, six states, including California, Florida, Indiana, Ohio, Oregon and North Carolina, are actively participating in the first waiver demonstration project as of 2013. Beginning on July

1, 2007, two of California's 58 counties (Alameda and Los Angeles) opted to participate in a Capped Allocation Demonstration Project, which waived certain Title IV-E requirements for participating counties for five years until June 30, 2012, and later extended to June 30, 2014. New legislation has since enabled additional states to participate in the waiver after the first phase of demonstration projects. In California, as of September 2013, 18 counties, including the County of Santa Clara, have submitted letters of intent to participate in the extension of the California Title IV-E waiver with a projected start date of July 1, 2014. Based on the State's proposed fiscal methodology, the majority of these "intent" counties are projected to see increased federal funding based on projections made using data from the County's Administrative and Assistance Claim for FFY 2008-09. The County's share of federal assistance funding, if it chooses to participate in the demonstration, would increase from \$9.8 million to approximately \$13.4 million. By the end of the waiver phase in FFY 2018-19, the State projects the County of Santa Clara's federal foster care assistance reimbursement to increase to \$14.9 million, or 52 percent more than the FFY 2008-09 base year federal receipts. Negotiations between the State of California and HHS's Administration for Children and Families are ongoing to complete the final terms and conditions for the waiver. While many critical unanswered questions remain about the fiscal methodology to be used and its potential impacts to federal funding, the State intends to continue pursuing an extension of the waiver once the government shutdown concludes.

The decision to accept the federal waiver will likely require action by the Board of Supervisors by the end of calendar year 2013 or early 2014. This issue requires a comprehensive cost-benefit analysis to determine the impact of reduced federal funding and potential net County benefit by investing in more preventative, supportive services for DFCS families. The waiver would also impact funding to the County's Probation Department, and as a result, more analysis is needed to determine what the net impact of accepting the waiver would be to the County. Numerous studies suggest that a significant portion of the caseload of probation departments is comprised of former foster youth. While many factors may influence the link between the child welfare system and probation population, it is suggested that the County consider the overall impact the waiver could potentially have on keeping youth out of the foster care system, and perhaps, ultimately out of the probation system. Research from the first waiver demonstration project in Alameda and Los Angeles Counties did not track outcomes for youth at the individual child-level. Consequently, it is difficult to assess the waiver's impact on youth and families in those counties as well as if the overall child welfare and probation populations have decreased because of the waiver. According to CDSS, child-specific outcome measures will be part of the second demonstration phase and could provide counties such as Santa Clara with meaningful data on how to prevent entry into not only the child welfare system, but also the probation system.

III. Child Fatality Reporting and Investigation Protocol

The Department has a legal responsibility to investigate child fatalities or near-fatalities that result from allegations of abuse and/or neglect. According to Penal Code Sections 11155.9 (k) and (l), law enforcement and child welfare agencies must cross-report all instances of child death suspected to be related to child abuse or neglect, regardless of whether the deceased child has any known surviving siblings. Furthermore, Section 11174.34 of the Penal Code requires a

record be created in the Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CW/CMS). Child deaths are also reviewed by the County's Children's Death Review Team. Since 1985, the Review Team has met monthly to review all deaths of children under the age of 18 who have died suddenly and unexpectedly. The Review Team is comprised of County staff from the Coroner/Medical Examiner, Valley Medical Center, Social Services Agency, Office of the District Attorney and also representatives from community-based organizations. The Team meets monthly to understand how and why children die in the County, to influence policies and programs to improve child health, safety and protection, and to prevent future child deaths.

The most recent version of the Department's Online Policies and Procedures (OPP) Manual, as of June 6, 2013, states that the "reports must be taken on all children, including stillborns, who die in Santa Clara County, whether or not they are served by DFCS." Law enforcement reports of such deaths trigger a separate series of questions that are part of the Severe Child Injury or Death (SCID) Protocol. The OPP Manual states that this protocol requires DFCS be notified when "a severely injured child or a deceased child's body is located at a potential crime scene." The June 2013 requirements appear less stringent than those in place through May 2013, which, according to earlier versions of Departmental policy, stated that all SCID referrals would require immediate response by DFCS staff "regardless of circumstances, unless there are no other children in the home or family, or (the case is) downgraded by a manager." As a result of Department policies in effect from August 2011 to May 2013, DFCS staff reported that between August 2011 and September 2012, there were instances in which child death reports from mandated reporters resulted in DFCS referrals and investigations, even though the reports explicitly stated there was not reasonable suspicion of abuse or neglect.

As of August 2013, DFCS staff and County Counsel are continuing to refine OPP language and procedures regarding child fatalities, responding to evolving regulatory language and direction coming from the California Department of Social Services. As part of this review, the Department should clarify the intent regarding immediate in-person response to all SCID referrals, and to make sure the policy reflects past social worker experience regarding such cases, and that current social worker practice reflects whatever Department policy is established. This should be done in concert with the Office of the County Counsel, to balance the need to use response resources effectively while limiting any potential County liability for investigations or failures to pursue an investigation.

IV. Coordinated Travel of Social Workers

Department social workers must frequently travel out-of-county to comply with court-ordered visitations of youth or to escort youth to and from residential placements. Due to the high volume of ground travel required to comply with court-mandated visits, advance travel authorization is waived for workers who do not require overnight lodging. Non-ground travel requests are funneled through an administrative assistant who processes requests for social worker and DFCS client travel. Until FY 2011-12, the Department had an Administrative Support Officer I dedicated to coordinating all DFCS travel; following the deletion of this position, administrative and executive administrative assistants assumed travel coordination responsibilities. According to Social Services Agency Accounts Payable staff, DFCS travel

comprises approximately 70 percent of all SSA travel. In Calendar Year 2012, the Department authorized \$287,376 in non-ground travel expenditures (hotels, airfare, meals, car rentals, etc.). Travel records indicate there may be opportunities to consolidate the number of out-of-state trips and reduce travel expenditure. Clerical staff assigned to arranging travel attempt to combine trips when possible, but such coordination does not happen on a consistent or formalized basis, and does not occur for consolidating social worker ground travel. In the absence of a Department-wide travel coordinator, Department staff reported examples of multiple social workers traveling to the same location to conduct court-ordered visits that could have been completed by only one social worker. As the number of youth placed out-of-county and out-of-state increase, particularly as more non-minor dependent youth remain in the child welfare system and require monthly in-person visits regardless of geographic location, the Department might consider working with the County Controller to amend the travel policy to coordinate and consolidate out-of county social worker travel when possible. The Department should also explore the use of technology and other online tools to geographically map where youth are located and how social workers with clients in the same area can collaborate. This would improve accountability for mileage and travel expenses, as managers and supervisors would be more likely to be aware of travel destinations and possibilities for DFCS staff to provide courtesy visits at reduced expense to the County.

V. Strategic Planning Regarding Family Resource Centers

The Department operates four family resource centers (FRCs), which offer support groups, resources, counseling to DFCS clients and case management for voluntary DFCS cases. Three centers are located in San Jose and serve specific populations, including the Asian-Pacific Islander community, Latino community (Nuestra Casa FRC) and African-American community (Ujirani FRC). The fourth center is located in Gilroy and serves South County clients. Until November 2009, the three San Jose-based FRCs were located in separate satellite offices embedded in the community. Under this model, the FRCs served the community-at-large, providing services to any family regardless of whether the family had an open case with the Department. The centers provided preventive services and focused on family maintenance and preservation.

As a result of budget cuts and other factors, the three San Jose-based resource centers are now co-located in one facility under a single manager, and two supervisors. Resources have shifted away from preventive services to the broader community and are only available to DFCS-referred clients. While the centers have experienced significant changes in recent years, little strategic planning has been conducted to discuss the Department's future vision and goals for the centers. The Department may wish to consider incorporating the family resource centers into its broader strategic planning, and further explore the possibility of partnering with community-based organizations, public schools and/or First Five of Santa Clara County to continue offering services in the community. As noted below, in a survey of nine other jurisdictions that also operate FRCs, the County of Santa Clara is the only one to report that it does not co-locate its resource centers with another public or non-profit partner, which could represent improved service delivery at reduced cost to the County.

Survey of Other County Social Services Agencies

To gain an understanding of distinctions and similarities between the Department of Family and Children's Services of the County of Santa Clara County and other child welfare agencies in other comparable counties, we developed a survey and solicited responses from agencies in the State's largest counties and adjacent Bay Area counties, including the County of Santa Clara. A total of 10 counties, including Santa Clara, provided complete survey responses. When appropriate, information from the surveys has been included in various sections of this report. It should be noted that the survey responses contain self-reported information. The Management Audit Division did not verify the accuracy of the reported information. A summary of survey responses from each of the 10 responding county agencies is included as Attachment I.3. Copies of the full response from each jurisdiction are available upon request.

Highlights from the survey responses include:

- Caseload standards varied across counties and by case type:
 - Emergency Response caseload standards were higher in five counties when compared to Santa Clara's standard of 14 cases per month. In these counties, the standard cap can be as high as 18 new cases per month.
 - Three counties reported the use of caseload standards for Dependency Investigations. Santa Clara County is only one of two counties that does not set a minimum or maximum number of DI caseload standards.
- Six of the eight responding counties reported using a vertical case management model in some capacity, and outcomes have varied. Two counties report the use of a partially vertical model for specialized populations and/or programs. Two counties have implemented a full vertical model in the past year, but it remains too early to determine the impact of this practice change. Two counties abandoned the model citing lengthy delays in case processing.
- Of the six outside counties that reported operating an emergency receiving and intake center, half report the use of contract staff to provide child care for admitted youth, allowing county placement staff to focus exclusively on identifying placement.
- The County of Santa Clara is one of three counties surveyed to offer a resource center for foster youth to serve the non-minor dependent (NMD) population.
- Nine counties, including Santa Clara, report operating at least one Family Resource Center. Of this sample, the County of Santa Clara is the only county that does not co-locate its Family Resource Centers with a public school, community-based organization or First Five Family Resource Center.

Recommendation Priorities

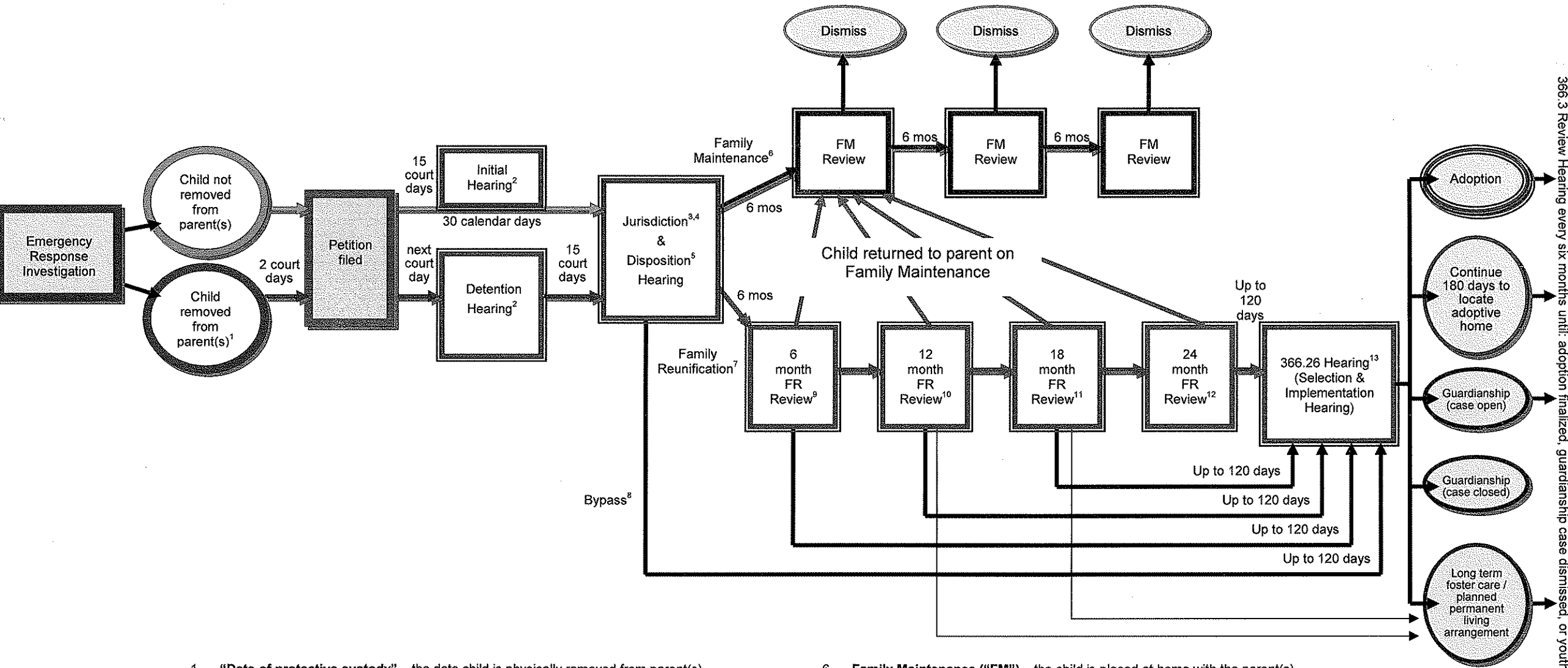
The priority rankings shown for each recommendation in the audit report are consistent with the audit recommendation priority structure adopted by the Finance and Government Operations Committee of the Board of Supervisors, as follows:

- **Priority 1:** Recommendations that address issues of non-compliance with federal, State and local laws, regulations, ordinances and the County Charter; would result in increases or decreases in expenditures or revenues of \$250,000 or more; or, suggest significant changes in federal, State or local policy through amendments to existing laws, regulations and policies.
- **Priority 2:** Recommendations that would result in increases or decreases in expenditures or revenues of less than \$250,000; advocate changes in local policy through amendments to existing County ordinances and policies and procedures; or, would revise existing departmental or program policies and procedures for improved service delivery, increased operational efficiency, or greater program effectiveness.
- **Priority 3:** Recommendations that address program-related policies and procedures that would not have a significant impact on revenues and expenditures, but would result in modest improvements in service delivery and operating efficiency.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the management and staff of the Department of Family and Children Service's for their cooperation and assistance throughout the audit. Managers, supervisors and line staff provided much of the data contained in the report to audit staff, and certain recommendations are the result of analysis performed following interviews with managers, supervisors and other staff during the course of the audit. In addition, we would also like to thank the management of the Social Services Agency, including the Department of Employment and Benefit Services, Financial Management Services and the Office of Contracts Management, for their assistance, as well.

Juvenile Dependency Court Process



1 "Date of protective custody" – the date child is physically removed from parent(s)
 2 Initial Hearing – the first hearing in each case
 3 Jurisdiction Hearing – the hearing at which the court decides if the allegations are true or not
 4 "Date entered foster care" – a court finding, defined as the date of jurisdiction or 60 days after the date of protective custody, whichever is first
 5 Disposition Hearing – the hearing at which the court declares dependency and orders the plan for the family; can be held the same day as Jurisdiction or either 10 court days later (if the child has been detained) or 30 calendar days later (if the child has not been detained)

6 Family Maintenance ("FM") – the child is placed at home with the parent(s)
 7 Family Reunification ("FR") – the child is placed in out-of-home care
 8 Bypass – no reunification services are offered; go directly to 366.26 hearing
 9 Six months from disposition
 10 Twelve months from date entered foster care
 11 Eighteen months from date of protective custody
 12 Twenty-four months from date of protective custody
 13 366.26 Hearing – the hearing at which the court decides the permanent plan for the child

366.3 Review Hearing every six months until adoption finalized, guardianship case dismissed, or youth emancipates

Attachment I.1

County of Santa Clara
 Social Services Agency
 Department of Family & Children's Services



373 West Julian Street, 5th Floor
 San Jose, California 95110-2335

July 3, 2013

Ms. Cheryl Solov
 Contract Principal Management Auditor
 Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors
 County Government Center, East Wing, 10th Floor
 70 West Hedding Street
 San Jose, CA 95110

Dear Ms. Solov:

The following list of Social Services Agency, Department of Family and Children's Services accomplishments and/or activities is being provided as your office requested:

Department-Wide Initiatives and Accomplishments

- Initiated Departmental Strategic Planning.
- Developed draft mission and values statements as part of the strategic planning process
- Developed and submitted the Santa Clara County, Child Welfare System Improvement Plan in collaboration with Juvenile Probation.
- In collaboration with Juvenile Probation, applied for and received a technical assistance grant through the Robert F. Kennedy Action Corps (funded by the MacArthur Foundation and Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency prevention) for Systems Integration Reform.
- Initiated an independent process to better understand and address issues around cultural tensions within the Department.
- Began installation and implementation of a practice model developed through the California Partners for Permanence Grant Initiative.
- Implemented department wide training and systems collaboration focused on Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, Transgendered youth the Putting Pride Into Practice Initiative
- SSA/DFCS, in partnership with Department of Mental Health and Juvenile Probation, initiated and implemented a procurement to solicit providers for the Wraparound Program in Santa Clara County, which was a major system-wide shift from historical practice.
- Participation in the transition from the grant-funded Family Wellness Court to the integrated Dependency Wellness Court model that provides sustainable cross-system collaboration and service delivery.
- Increased focus and awareness on working with father's and paternal relatives through the Fatherhood Initiative.
- Participation in Cross-Agency work addressing Commercially Sexually Exploited Children.

Board of Supervisors: Mike Wasserman, Dave Cortese, Ken Yeager, S. Joseph Simitian
 County Executive: Jeffrey V. Smith

Ms. Cheryl Solov
 Contract Principal Management Auditor
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- Participation in Cross-Agency work to develop a trauma informed system of care.
- Continued departmental training related to race, ethnicity, culture, and historical trauma.
- Staff led Immigration Services Committee has continued to provide leadership related to internal policy development; maintained a positive liaison relationship with various consulates and international entities; and provides consultation to staff needing to navigate through immigration related matters.
- Continued staff recruitment efforts through increased coordination with SSA/HR and ESA.
- Participation in School-Linked Services Collaborative.
- Participation in the Franklin-McKinley Childrens' Initiative.
- DFCS was selected as one of the State's four pilot counties for the Resource Family Approval Project, which seeks to standardize and streamline the process of becoming a resource home for foster youth.
- Managers, supervisors, and staff received training and began implementing Reflective Practice as the foundation for building a coaching organization.
- Utilization of external coaches for supervisors/managers as a means to build internal capacity and fluency for supervisors/managers to become coaches for staff.
- In collaboration with the Department of Mental Health, began preparations for the implementation of practices related to the Katie A. Lawsuit settlement.
- Santa Clara County has maintained an overall lower rate of entry and in care rate than that of the State.
- Compared to statewide data, a larger proportion of children in care in Santa Clara County are placed with relatives.
- Santa Clara County has maintained a high rate of families reunifying in a timely manner.
- Santa Clara County has improved placement stability for children in care.

Administrative Support

- Recruited two (2) supervisors to develop and coordinate Departmental policies and procedures, resulting in significant progress being made toward updating the Online Policy and Procedures Manual.
- Added a Project Manager Position to provide oversight of Special Funds unit, Clerical Support, and special projects.
- Provided leadership in the application of a Federal infrastructure grant (Circle of Care) that was awarded.
- Took on the writing of DFCS related contract related transmittals previously done by the SSA Agency Office of Contract Management.
- Developed partnership with FIRST 5 Santa Clara and Department of Public Health to expand visiting public health nursing services to DFCS clients.
- Collaborated with Bay Area Universities and Silicon Valley Children's Fund for the Emerging Scholars Program.
- Established a Youth-driven transition aged center, called The Hub, that includes 9 co-located partners providing and leveraging services to current and former transition-aged foster youth.

Ms. Cheryl Solov
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- Successfully implemented policies, training as an operational unit to address the non-minor dependent population that has emerged as a result of the passage of AB 12/AB212/AB1712.

Receiving Center

- Transitioned the Receiving, Assessment, and Intake Center Operation, with its current composition of staff and co-located partners from Union Avenue to Santa Clara Street as the result of the sale of the Union Avenue facility.

Child Abuse and Neglect Center (Hotline)

- Hired a new manager.
- Began utilizing reflective practice in supervision with staff.
- Modified some shifts to accommodate answering calls during peak hours.

Emergency Response Services

- Maintained high level of responsiveness in accordance with state mandated requirements despite severe staff shortages.
- Improved quality of joint case staffing by utilizing more trauma informed tools.
- Provided leadership in implementing increased departmental and community training/awareness regarding safe sleeping practices for infants.
- Increased departmental coordination of emergency response cases with the South County Bureau.

Dependency Investigation Services

- Managed increasing caseload and workload despite staffing shortages.
- Improved quality of joint case staffing by utilizing more trauma informed tools.

Continuing Services Bureaus

- Managed increased caseload and workload expectations despite diminishing resources.
- Transition of managers resulting from retirements.

Family and Permanency Bureau

- Transition of manager due to retirement.
- Completed an assessment of resource homes for placement readiness.
- Increased foster parent recruitment efforts.
- Provided leadership and coordination of the Quality Parent Initiative in Santa Clara County.
- Initiated the Faith Based Alliance in Santa Clara County to assist with Foster Home Recruitment.

DFCS Family Resource Centers

- Maintains service related classes for DFCS related clients.
- Assists in the coordination and distribution of Operation Santa.
- Hire and transition of a new manager.

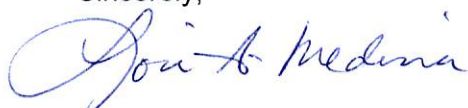
Ms. Cheryl Solov
Contract Principal Management Auditor
Page Four

South County Services Bureau

- Trained and implemented staff facilitated Spanish Speaking Parenting classes due to lack of community based resources.
- Increased departmental coordination of emergency response cases.

Please let me know if you have any questions about the information provided. We look forward to further discussions as the Audit report is finalized.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lori A. Medina". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lori A. Medina, M.S.W.
Director

Survey of California County Child Welfare Departments

	Alameda	Fresno	Monterey	Los Angeles	Orange	Riverside	Sacramento	San Francisco	San Mateo	Santa Clara
FRONT END OPERATIONS										
What is the maximum capacity of your county's emergency receiving, assessment and intake center?										
	No response	Does not operate	11-20 beds	11-20 beds	12; 216 children at Residential Shelter	Does not operate	21-50 beds	n/a; youth are placed directly in foster or group homes	11-20 beds	6-10 beds
Please check all of the following that describe your county's emergency receiving center:										
Placement staff are available on-site	x	n/a		x	x	n/a	x	x	x	x
Child care is provided by contractors	x	n/a	x	x		n/a				
Child care is provided by County staff	x	n/a		x	x	n/a	x	x	x	x
Contractors process intakes	x	n/a				n/a				
Medical health staff are available for assessments	x	n/a	x	x	x	n/a	x (contracted)	x	x	x
Mental health staff are available for assessments	x	n/a	x	x	x	n/a	x (contracted)	x	x	x
Other (please specify)					24 hours safety officer; Public Health Nurses conduct early childhood development screenings	n/a	On-site with non-profit run Shelter	Child Protection Center is located at SF General Hospital, where children receive medical clearance	Education Liaisons also housed at Receiving Home; only children 12+ at Rec. Home, under 12 are placed in Emergency Shelter care	Limited placement support available and limits for mental health and medical assessments
Has your county tried implementing a vertical case management model?										
Yes/No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes

Survey of California County Child Welfare Departments

	Alameda	Fresno	Monterey	Los Angeles	Orange	Riverside	Sacramento	San Francisco	San Mateo	Santa Clara
SPECIALIZED UNITS AND POPULATIONS										
Does your County have specialized units that serve specific populations?										
	No response	Chronic Runaway Youth	No specialized units; just specialized workers	Asian Ancestry, Chronic Runaway Youth, Non-Minor Dependents, Spanish Monolingual, Substance Abuse, Native American, Deaf Services, Medical Case Management, Undocumented children	Chronic Runaway Youth, Domestic Violence, Sexual Abuse	Community Care Facilities (group homes); Commercially Sexually Exploited Youth; Non-Minor Dependents	Supported Transition Unit (NMDs); adoption; guardianship. Dependency and emergency response workers specialize by geographic region	Spanish monolingual	One specialized NMD worker, not specialized unit	Domestic violence, Non-Minor Dependents, Sexual Abuse, Spanish Monolingual (Continuing), African American (ER unit)
Following the passage of AB 12, the California Fostering Connections to Success Act, has your county created any specific resources to serve non-minor dependents (NMDs).										
	Expanded Transitional Housing Placement Plus (THP+) offerings	Resource center(s) for foster youth	No specialized units; just specialized workers	Resource center(s) for foster youth; Expanded THP+ offerings; developing AB 12 units; some offices have Youth Permanency Units	Specialized workers and training of specific staff on extended foster care (EFC) policies; Also created an EFC steering committee, and AB 12 inbox for EFC Q&A	Specialized AB 12 Continuing Services unit; Expanded THP+ offerings; expanded community partner relationships; EDA funded Youth Opportunity Centers	Specialized AB 12 Continuing Services Unit; specific caseload standards for NMD youth THP+ expansion is in process	No response	Specialized AB 12 Continuing Services Unit; Expanded THP+ offerings	Specialized AB 12 Continuing Services Unit; Resource center(s) for foster youth; Expanded THP+ offerings
For children placed outside of your county's jurisdiction, how do you coordinate site visits?										
Offer reciprocal inter-county courtesy supervision	x	x	x	x	x		x		x	
Offer inter-county relative home visits		x		x						Sporadically offered
Coordinates social worker travel to out-of-state placements	x	x		x	x	x			x	x
Does not have a policy coordinating out-of-state travel							x	x		
Other (please specify)			Reciprocal agreement on case-by-case basis	LAC children placed out-of-state under ICPC are supervised by the state of residence		Dedicated ICPC unit staffed by a supervisor and 5 FTE social workers	CPS staff only travel out of state and county to visit AB12 cases		Social workers maintain monthly contact with those children	
In the past five years, our county has observed the number of families willing to foster or adopt children:										
	Stay the same	No response	Stay the same	Number of families willing to adopt has stayed the same, while the number of families willing to foster has decreased significantly	Decrease slightly	Increase slightly	Increase significantly	Foster home availability has decrease significantly; constant number of adoptions	Decrease slightly	Stay the same

Survey of California County Child Welfare Departments

	Alameda	Fresno	Monterey	Los Angeles	Orange	Riverside	Sacramento	San Francisco	San Mateo	Santa Clara
CASELOAD STANDARDS										
How is work distributed among social workers?										
	Staff specialize by case type	Staff specialize by case type, by client language, all staff are generalists	Staff specialize by case type, geographic location, client language	Staff specialize by case type, geographic location, client language; all staff are generalists	Staff specialize by case type, geographic location, client language	Staff specialize by case type, by geographic location	Staff specialize by case type, by geographic location	Staff specialize by case type, by geographic location, by client language	Staff specialize by client language; all staff are generalists; staff specializing by geographic location is in progress	Staff specialize by case type, by geographic location, by client language; all staff are generalist for voluntary, informal supervision and continuing services
How is social worker caseload measured?										
Total number of active cases	x	x		x	x	x	x		x	x
Total number of bilingual cases	x			x				x		x
Combination of active cases and bilingual cases	x		x	x						x
Cases are weighted by difficulty using a scoring system				A work group is currently considering this	Cases weighted by type for ER/FM/FR/PP					x
Other (please specify)						Investigative Services units use a formula of 3 referrals for every 1 Court Dependency case				All of the above are considered; number of referrals in ER, and children and point system in Continuing; no standard in DI
Are caseloads in your county weighted and/or adjusted for bilingual social workers?										
	Yes	No	No	Yes	No response	No	No	Yes; 15% differential between generic and bilingual caseload	No	Yes, reduced caseload as soon as a worker has a caseload of 75% full bilingual; workers also receive differential
What are your caseload standards for social workers with the following types of cases?										
Emergency Response	15	Ranges between 8-17 depending on crisis or non-crisis classification and staff level	15.7	Yardstick is 18; assignments capped at 33 new children per month	No response	18 (blended ER/DI)	n/a	No response	16	14 (adjusted for vacation, days off, and language)
Court Intervention	5 new cases per month		None	Yardstick is 10; assignments capped at 12 new children per month	No response	18 (blended ER/DI)	n/a	No response	6	No standard
Informal Supervision	32			34	No response	n/a	n/a	No response	25	25 children maximum
Continuing Services	39 for permanent placement youth			Yardstick is 31; cases capped at 38 children; permanent placement (PP) case yardstick is 56	No response	48	n/a	No response	25	Maximum of 30, however, caseloads are mixed so there is a weighted formula to calculate caseloads

Survey of California County Child Welfare Departments

	Alameda	Fresno	Monterey	Los Angeles	Orange	Riverside	Sacramento	San Francisco	San Mateo	Santa Clara
Family Maintenance	32	Ranges between 5-13	35	Yardstick is 31; cases capped at 38 children	No response	(See Continuing)	n/a	No response	25	25 children maximum
Family Reunification	23	Ranges between 18-30+ children	27	Yardstick is 31; cases capped at 38 children	No response	(See Continuing)	n/a	No response	25	16 children maximum
Adoption Finalization	40 for homestudy workers	30	None	Capped at 45 children	No response	54	n/a	No response	12 to 14	No standard
Post Adoptive Services	Varies		None	20 new children per month	No response	7	n/a	No response	250+	No standard
Non-Minor Dependents	n/a		None	Included as Continuing	No response	30 (mixed caseload of 16-20 year olds)	n/a	No response	25	Only standard that exists is the PP caseload of 30
What factors are considered when determining caseload standards?										
Ability to assign sibling groups to the same worker			x	x				No response	x	x
Case weighting formula					x	x		No response		x
Child Welfare League of America recommended standards								No response		x
Council of Accreditation recommended standards								No response	x	
Labor union negotiations	x			x				No response		x
Provision of bilingual services				x				No response	x	x
Travel associated with case			x	x				No response	x	
Other (please specify)		Worker classification		Staff availability	Specialized nature of cases	Only Investigative Services use formula	No established caseload standards. When caseloads get too high, "leveling" is put in place for which ER makes some Immediate Responses into 10 day responses; For Dependency, some tasks are eliminated			
What data or information do you use to track social workers' performance and set/adjust caseloads?										
Safe Measures	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	
Caseload reports distributed by email			x	x	x		x		x	x
Caseload reports available in an application or online	x		x	x	x	x			x	x
Other (please specify)				Online repository of various data reports		Use of CW/CMS system required	Weekly caseload reports distributed to all managers; reports contain information about timely face-to-face contacts and other initiatives			

Survey of California County Child Welfare Departments

	Alameda	Fresno	Monterey	Los Angeles	Orange	Riverside	Sacramento	San Francisco	San Mateo	Santa Clara
FEDERAL FUNDING										
Is your county currently participating or planning to participate in the federal Title IV-E waiver?										
	Yes, we currently accept the waiver	Maybe, we are considering the waiver	No, we do not plan to accept the waiver	Yes, we currently accept the waiver	Yes, we are planning and/or in the process of accepting the waiver	Yes, we are planning and/or in the process of accepting the waiver	Maybe, we are considering the waiver	No, we do not plan to accept the waiver	Maybe, we are considering the waiver	Maybe, we are considering the waiver
FAMILY RESOURCE CENTERS										
Please describe your Family Resource Centers:										
	n/a; do not operate	Located at a public school; located with a faith-based or other CBO	Located at a public school	Located at a county government center or county facility; located with a First Five FRC. Also operate 2 Kinship Resource Centers that provide information to relative caregivers	Located at a county government center, public school, with a faith based or other CBO, in specific neighborhoods. 12 FRCs in multiple locations	Located at a county government center; in a shopping center; in specific neighborhoods	Located with and funded by First Five FRC; Strategically located in specific neighborhoods	Braided funding from First Five SF, Department and Agency; located with faith-based or other CBOs; with First Five FRCs; strategically located in specific neighborhoods	Located at a public school; strategically located in specific neighborhoods	Located at a county government center or county facility
DISPROPORTIONALITY										
Do you have specific policies or initiatives currently in place to address the disproportionate representation of minorities?										
	Yes; we have a weekly workgroup that uses the BSC methodology of initiating the PDSA method of testing small incremental change	Yes; CAPP, Cultural Brokers; Racial Sobriety Training; Collaboration with grass roots organizations, ex. Street Saints	No	Yes, See attached response	Yes, OC participates in the Eliminating Racial Disparity and Disproportionality initiative	Yes, See attached response	No response	Yes	Yes	Yes; current System Improvement plan and contracts for tracking and analysis through Mission Analytics

Supplemental narrative responses to survey questions

Question: Has your county tried implementing a vertical case management model, in which one social worker oversees multiple phases of a family's interaction with the child welfare system (i.e. from emergency response to out-of-home placement)?

Alameda

Yes; We have two units that work with babies 0-3 in a vertical case management model. After jurisdiction, the staff keep the case through the reunification process and either family maintenance or permanence. I'm unaware of any differences in case duration or re-entry between these two units. However, it's very hard to compare to the other units since these units only work with ages 0-3.

Los Angeles

Yes; Vertical case management was utilized in the 1990's and DCFS is currently using vertical case management for specialized programs such as our Asian Pacific Unit, Medical Case Management and Deaf Services Unit. The majority of CSWs are not assigned vertical caseloads and assigned to Emergency Response, Dependency Investigations or Continuing Services. This remains the current plan.

Orange

Yes; At one time, OC utilized a vertical case management model that included intake, investigations, and continuing functions.

Riverside

Yes; In the past year, we have implemented a partial, vertical case management model that has taken our Emergency Response (ER) social workers and our Court Dependency Unit (CDU) social workers and re-defined them as Investigative Services (IS) social workers. In the past, an ER social worker would only investigate the referral, and if needed, file a detention report; after which, the referral would be made into a case and transferred to a CDU social worker. Now, the same social worker who investigates the referral would continue with the family through the decision for dependency and transfer the case once it is in either FM or FR status. The decision to make this vertical case management change was driven by Riverside County's goals to improve in the areas of safe and timely reunification, decrease the number of children who re-enter in the child welfare system and to decrease the number of initial entries in the child welfare system. Given that the program has only been implemented for one year, the impact of this change cannot yet be captured empirically.

Sacramento

Yes; Vertical case management was implemented in March 2010. At the time of the detention hearing, the case is transferred from Emergency Response (who writes the detention report) to a primary court services worker and a secondary dependency worker. The court services worker writes the juris/diso report and keeps the case until that hearing is held. The dependency worker provides FR/PP services and must contact the parents within 15 calendar days of the detention hearing. The dependency worker becomes the primary worker when the court services worker

closes his/her case. The dependency worker keeps the case through reunification or emancipation. Adoption/guardianship are separate units.

San Francisco

Yes; We tried a vertical case management system with a combined court dependency and family services (FM/FR) combination. However this was about 20 years ago; it lasted for one year and was disbanded as staff did not have the time they needed to do the in-depth court assessment work. We also have had a specialized vertical caseload for sex trauma cases in which ER and CDU were combined. However because of the lengthy court process in many of these cases, they stayed in CDU for months and staff were not always available to take new ERs. We have since moved to a more generalized system and no longer have specialized caseloads. More recently we have vertical units, in which there are several different functions carried within the unit by different units so there is consistent supervision.

Question: Do you have specific policies or initiatives currently in place to address disproportionate representation of minorities in the child welfare system?

Los Angeles

Yes; We have several initiatives, including Kinship Care Services, Adoptions, Recruitment and Family Finding, the California Partners for Permanency Project (CAPP), Parents in Partnership, Fatherhood, and the Knowing Who You Are training. There are also initiatives that address the needs at the court/legal and data level, and our agency's role in human trafficking and other workgroups addressing the needs of ASFA issues and dissemination of resources. Each of DCFS' 19 regional offices has an Eliminating Racial Disparity and Disproportionality (ERDD) plan. ERDD is also one of the Department's Strategic Plan Objectives.

Riverside

Yes; Riverside County DPSS has partnered with a faith-based service provider to expand our "Parent Partner Program" to include and specifically address Racial Disparity and Disproportionality (RDD) as part of our traditional program. Traditionally, our Parent Partner Program provided resources for youth and families to prevent placements and to help youth transition out of the system and assisted current clients by pairing them with previous clients who had successfully reunified with their children. These "Parent Partners" mentor and help navigate "new-to-the-system" parents through the reunification process. To enhance this program and improve outcomes of the African-American population in Riverside County our expanded model targets prevention efforts that include a strong cultural competence component and focus on RDD including education, outreach, public awareness, and parent engagement. Educational services are offered through faith-based one-on-one mentoring sessions, counseling, parenting support classes, and a multi-week program with a curriculum aimed at assisting individuals through self-improvement and development. Through education, the program fosters the development of positive change with the overall goal of decreasing child maltreatment by engaging parents, identifying services, and linking families with community resources. To maximize the participation of children and adults, who come from racial and ethnic minorities and members of under-served or under-represented groups, the provider and/or parent partner participates in countywide Team Decision Making (TDM) meetings. This interaction effectively

bridges the communication gap that exists between the parents and the child welfare system. Partners also collaborate with various community partners and participate in numerous CSD planning meetings, trainings, and client engagement meetings. Parent Partners, because they are already familiar with the needs of the parents, can quickly establish a healthy working relationship with families. Successful parent partners help us meet our desired System Improvement Plan (SIP) goals to reduce rates of re-entry, increase time to reunification, and improve placement stability. On the issue of RDD, the purpose of the program is to advocate and effectively communicate the need for developing strategies and focused leadership in communities where children and families of color, especially African-American children, experience significantly worse outcomes in the child welfare system, than do non-minority children.

San Francisco

Yes; About 10 years ago, SF conducted an extensive study on Disproportionality in our child welfare system. We have also participated in federal and state breakthrough series collaborative to look at disproportionality. We have established several practices as a way to improve disproportionality. This includes differential response, SDM, TDMs, Safety Organized Practice and case review protocols. We also have had specific training to promote discussion of disproportionality. Disproportionality threads through numerous policies and handbook sections rather than being a stand-alone document.

Section 1. Improving the County's Responsiveness to Reported Child Abuse and Neglect

Background

- **The Department of Family and Children's Services (DFCS) operates the 24/7 Child Abuse and Neglect (CAN) Reporting Center to receive referrals of alleged child abuse and neglect. Sixteen Social Worker IIIs are assigned to the center to answer calls from 8 a.m. - 10 p.m. daily. DFCS staff agree to be on-call from 7:30 p.m. to 8 a.m. to respond to referrals in an After Hours program. In FY 2012-13, the CAN Center received more than 26,000 calls, of which almost 10,000 were referred by the Center to the Emergency Response Division for initial investigation. Ultimately, 855 petitions were filed with the Superior Court to place children in protective custody, which resulted in the Court removing about 358 children from their homes.**

Problem

- **Due primarily to insufficient staff, workers answer only about 59.4 percent of the calls made to the center. Another 5,000, or 19.2 percent, go to voice mail¹; about 5,500 calls, or 21.1 percent, are neither recorded nor answered, and 0.3 percent are unaccounted for. On average, seven calls are received each hour but only 3.8 of them are answered. In addition to calls not answered, many callers experience long waits, hundreds of whom were on hold for an average of 20 minutes, and some for more than one hour. Further, current staffing schedules could be improved to better match call demand.**

Adverse Effect

- **Long wait times result in nearly one in every five callers hanging up prior to the call being answered. Since about one of every 53 calls actually answered or returned from voice mail ultimately results in removal of an abused or neglected child from a dangerous situation by the Court, failure to answer more than 7,000 calls annually results in abused and neglected children remaining in dangerous homes even though concerned individuals are calling to report these situations. Failure to answer all calls may violate Section 16501(f) the California Welfare and Institutions Code.**

Recommendations, Savings and Benefits

- **By filling and assigning seven vacant Social Worker III positions and one Social Work Supervisor position to the CAN Reporting Center, DFCS would be able to answer and return all incoming reports of child abuse and neglect on a timely basis, resulting in the protection and removal of children from dangerous situations.**

The Department of Family and Children's Services (DFCS) operates the County's child abuse and reporting hotline known as the Child Abuse and Neglect (CAN) Reporting Center. The CAN

¹ The Department reported that since January 2013 it has been tracking its voice mail follow-up process and determined that 64.6 percent of the callers who left voice mail were subsequently successfully contacted. However, it is unknown if this percentage is representative of the follow-up contact rate on an annual basis, or the average length of elapsed time from the initial call to the successful follow-up call.

Section 1. Improving the County's Responsiveness to Reported Child Abuse & Neglect

Reporting Center receives and screens reported allegations of child abuse and neglect as mandated by Section 16501(f) of the California Welfare and Institutions Code. According to this section of the code, county welfare departments “shall respond to any report of imminent danger to a child immediately and all other reports within 10 calendar days.”² In the County of Santa Clara, the CAN Reporting Center receives such reports and initiates the first response to allegations of abuse or neglect.

In FY 2012-13, the CAN Reporting Center received 26,248 calls, of which it answered 15,591, or 59.4 percent of the calls received.³ County Counsel confirmed that failure to answer all calls received could expose the County to claims that it violated the State Welfare and Institutions code described above. Based on this call volume, the CAN Reporting Center referred almost 10,000 cases to the Emergency Response Division for initial investigation, which ultimately resulted in 855 cases referred from the Emergency Response Division to the Dependency Investigation Division to petition the Superior Court for protective custody of children. At the time of the court petition, the children either remained at home, or were taken into protective custody for temporary placement. Ultimately, the Superior Court took custody of an estimated 358 children during FY 2012-13.

Existing Staffing is Insufficient to Respond to the Volume of Calls

The CAN Reporting Center operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Two Social Work Supervisors and 16 Social Worker III positions staff the center from 8:00 a.m.-10:00 p.m. daily. Staff from various DFCS bureaus volunteer to be on-call and are paid overtime to respond to referrals from 7:30 p.m. to 8 a.m. A CAN Reporting Center supervisor reported that, historically, staff were able to answer a greater proportion of calls. For example, as recently as May of 2006, staff were able to answer about 77.7 percent of the calls received during the month. However, based on current call volume and existing staff, only 59.4 percent of the calls were answered in FY 2012-13. We conducted a detailed analysis of the call data received during a sample four-month period from November 1, 2012 through February 28, 2013. During this period the CAN Reporting Center staff was only able to answer about 54.2 percent of the 9,016 calls received during the period.

Beginning in January 2013, DFCS began tracking the number of voice mail successfully returned by staff. Over the seven-month period from January 1, 2013 through July 31, 2013, staff successfully returned an average of 64.6 percent of voice mail. The number of calls answered, plus the number of successfully returned voice mail over the seven-month period resulted in 9,643 contacts made, or about 74.5 percent of the total 13,033 calls made to the CAN Reporting Center during the seven-month period. However, since the months of October 2012 through

² As discussed in Section 2, no definition of “immediate” is specified. According to representatives from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Region IX office, federal response requirements do not exist. Rather, the federal government uses metrics established by each state to determine adequate response times to reports of allegations of abuse and/or neglect.

³ In addition, the Department reports that during two recent months, an average of 6.8 calls were answered by after-hours social workers between 10:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m. daily. However, it is unknown if this call rate was representative of the entire fiscal year, how many if any calls during this period were abandoned, and how many of the calls answered were from law enforcement agencies related to prior calls received by the CAN Reporting Center or otherwise unrelated to new complaints.

Section 1. Improving the County's Responsiveness to Reported Child Abuse & Neglect

December 2012 were the three months of the fiscal year in which the CAN Reporting Center was able to answer the lowest percentage of calls received (47.7 percent to 54.6 percent), the estimated percentage of calls initially answered or eventually answered on a voice mail follow-up basis would be less than 74.5 percent, but the extent to which is uncertain. Nevertheless, while staff are able to return more than half of the voice mail, unnecessary delays between the time a report is initially made through voice mail and when staff finally makes contact with the caller could be avoided with sufficient staffing for immediate responses to incoming calls.

In addition to the calls received from the public through the CAN Reporting Center telephone lines, which are logged, tabulated and reported to the Child Abuse Council, calls received from the public and law enforcement at night between 10:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m. are answered by the After Hours program staff and logged, but not tabulated and reported to the Child Abuse Council. Further, calls received from law enforcement through two designated cell phones and one internal landline during the day between 8:00 a.m. and 8 p.m. are not logged, tabulated or reported.⁴ These practices diminish the accuracy and value of the reported incoming call data to the CAN Reporting Center.

Based on the detailed analysis of call volume for the four-month period from November 1, 2012 through February 28, 2013, it was determined that the 3-3:30 p.m. daily time period had the highest volume of calls, with as many as 20 calls within the half-hour, whereas the maximum staffing for any half-hour is 16 positions. On average, staff are only able to answer 3.8 of the 7.0 calls received each hour.

Furthermore, review of wait times on calls that were answered by the CAN Reporting Center showed that more than 292 calls, or 3.2 percent of the 9,016 calls made to the call center in the four-month detailed analysis period, were on hold for an average of 20 minutes, and some for more than one hour. When callers experience long wait times and delays, the chances the caller will abandon the call and the alleged abuse and neglect will go unreported increases.

Abandoned Calls Represent Potential Abuse and Neglect Cases Going Unreported

Primarily as a result of insufficient staffing and backlogged calls, more than one in every five calls to the CAN Reporting Center is abandoned by the caller, with the potential that cases of abuse and neglect are not reported. Since approximately one of every 53 calls answered or returned at the CAN Reporting Center ultimately results in the Superior Court assuming custody of an abused or neglected child, some children in the County remain in abusive or neglectful homes despite efforts by concerned individuals to report the problem. Though the extent to which previously abandoned calls were completed is unknown, if the rate of reports resulting in Court detentions resulting from completed calls is applied to the more than 7,000 calls abandoned or voice mail not returned annually, as many as 141 children could be living in unsafe homes.

Projected call volume data suggest that seven additional Social Worker III positions and one additional Social Work Supervisor are needed to answer all incoming calls and prepare and

⁴ Law enforcement calls between 8:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. are answered by the After Hours Program staff, which are logged, but not tabulated or reported.

Section 1. Improving the County's Responsiveness to Reported Child Abuse & Neglect

process the related reports. As of August 31, 2013, there were 19 vacant Social Worker II-III positions in DFCS and five vacant Social Work Supervisor positions. The Department should fill and assign seven vacant Social Worker III positions and one Social Work Supervisor position to the CAN Reporting Center to minimize abandoned calls and potentially unreported abuse and neglect. Filling these existing vacant positions would not increase the Department budget. However, if (1) all of the vacant Social Worker III positions were filled, and (2) it became necessary to add additional budgeted positions to enable the filling of such positions, it would result in additional expenditures of approximately \$1,028,830 in salaries and benefits, of which an estimated 82 percent would be paid from federal and State funds and 18 percent from County monies.

The CAN Reporting Center currently has two vacant work stations that could immediately accommodate additional staff. If two more work stations were added, clerical staff would have to be moved from their current work area, which the CAN Reporting Center supervisor reported would not be a problem operationally.

As discussed in Section 5 of this report, the Department should issue monthly management reports to the County Executive and Board of Supervisors reporting the number of calls received, answered, and abandoned at the CAN Reporting Center to monitor progress from the current 59 percent response rate to 100 percent, or a level otherwise acceptable to the Board and considered to be compliant with State law. These response rates and reports should also include calls from law enforcement, most of which are currently not tracked, tabulated or reported. Further, it is recommended that the County collaborate with its State representatives to introduce Statewide legislation creating a new State mandate requiring each county to regularly report to the State the number of calls received and responded to by its child abuse hotline. The effect of this new State mandate would enable the California Department of Social Services to monitor county response times to allegations of abuse, and to investigate instances in which large numbers of reports are not being received or responded to within the timeframes specified in by Welfare and Institutions Code 16501(f).

Current Staffing Schedules Do Not Adequately Match Timing of Calls and Work Demand

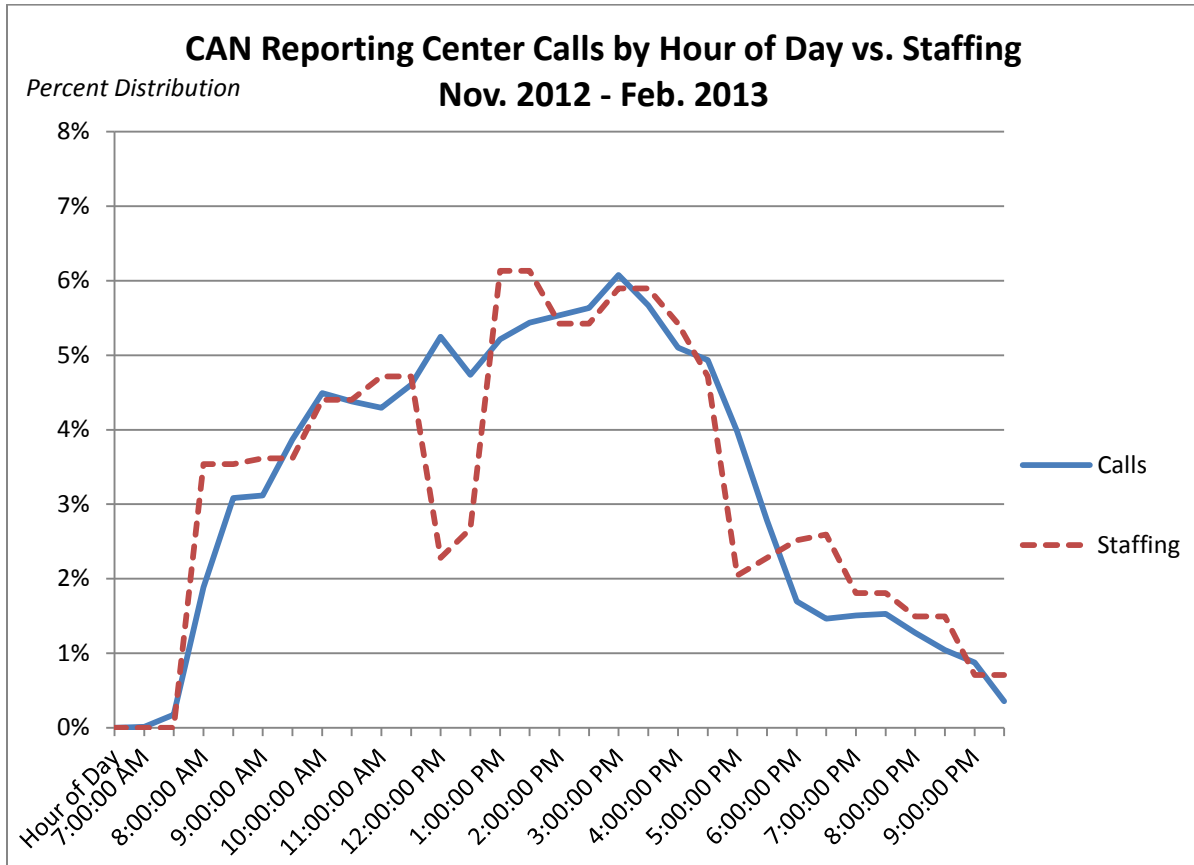
Of the 16 Social Worker III positions that answer calls at the CAN Reporting Center, 14 Social Workers are split between two shifts:

- **Day shift:** 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (two staff work until 4:30 p.m.)
- **Evening shift:** 12 p.m. to 9 p.m. (two staff work until 10 p.m.)

Two additional Social Workers staff a mid-day shift from 10 a.m.-7 p.m. to cover lunch and dinner breaks, while another Social Worker has a shift from 11 a.m.-8 p.m.

As the chart below shows, current staffing levels do not match the volume of calls by hour of the day as closely as they could with some scheduling adjustments. The periods that are most understaffed are from 12 p.m.-1 p.m. and 5 p.m.-6 p.m., while the periods that are most overstaffed are 8 a.m.-9 a.m., 1 p.m.-2 p.m. and 6 p.m.-7 p.m.

Chart 1.1



Source: Call center data provided by the Department for November 2012 through February 2013.

Attachment 1.1 compares the percent distribution of calls to the percent distribution of staff by every half-hour. The time period from 12 p.m.-12:30 p.m. has the largest deficit of percent distribution of staff compared to the percent volume of calls, which is 2.97 percent, followed by 12:30 p.m.-1 p.m. with a 2.06 percent deficit.

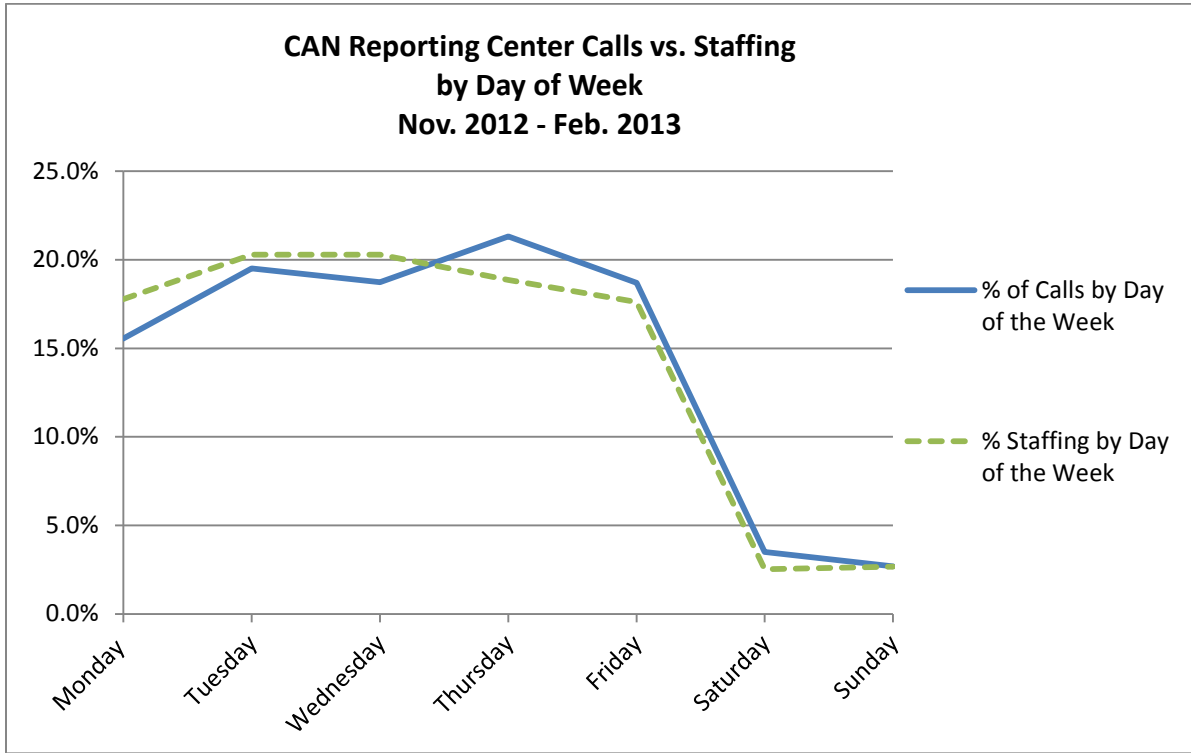
To better match the volume of calls by hour of the day, the Department should add more staff to a 9 a.m.-6 p.m. shift, which would require a meet and confer process. By doing so, there will be more staff to cover the understaffed periods of 12 p.m.-1 p.m. and 5 p.m.-6 p.m. In addition, because the Memorandum of Understanding for Social Worker III positions require a meal break at mid-shift, staff in a 9 a.m.- 6 p.m. shift would take their meal break from 1 p.m.-2 p.m., one of the time periods that is currently overstaffed.

Having sufficient staff to answer the volume of calls by hour of the day should reduce the number of calls that are abandoned or directed to voice mail. The Department would then be able to better respond to reports of potential abuse and neglect cases and better ensure the safety and welfare of children who could be at harm.

Section 1. Improving the County’s Responsiveness to Reported Child Abuse & Neglect

Similarly, analysis of the level of staffing and the volume of calls by day of the week demonstrate that existing staffing schedules do not adequately match the volume of calls and work demand for the CAN Reporting Center.

Chart 1.2



Source: Call center data provided by the Department for November 2012 through February 2013.

The chart above shows that the percent of staffing scheduled from Monday to Wednesday exceeds the percent volume of calls on those days of the week. In contrast, Thursday through Saturday are understaffed based on the percent of staff scheduled and the volume of calls. Further, Attachment 1.2 shows that Thursday has the largest volume of calls with 21.3 percent of the calls during the week, yet only 18.9 percent of the staff available to answer calls on that day, resulting in a staffing deficit of 2.5 percent. However, Monday has 15.6 percent of the calls during the week, yet 17.8 percent of the staffing available to answer such calls, or a 2.2 percent surplus of staff.

While the Department has made staffing adjustments since March 2013, such as having three Tuesday through Saturday shifts instead of only two, the Monday through Wednesday shifts are still somewhat proportionately overstaffed while Thursday and Friday are still proportionately understaffed.

The Department should further adjust staffing schedules by days of the week to ensure that there is adequate staff to answer the volume of calls by day of the week, which would require a meet and confer process. As previously discussed, such alignment of staff to workload demand could

Section 1. Improving the County's Responsiveness to Reported Child Abuse & Neglect

reduce abandoned calls and voice mail, improve service delivery and ensure the safety and welfare of children in the County who are potentially abused and neglected.

CONCLUSION

Current staffing at the Child Abuse and Neglect (CAN) Reporting Center is insufficient to handle the volume of calls, resulting in staff answering only about 59.4 percent of the more than 26,000 annual calls to the reporting center, while more than one-fifth of the calls are abandoned and about another one-fifth go to voice mail. The lack of response to all calls received exposes the County to claims that it violated State law. Because staff are only able to answer slightly more than one-half of the average number of calls received per hour, analysis of calls over a four-month period revealed that nearly 300 calls were on hold for an average of 20 minutes and some for more than an hour. Long wait times increase the likelihood of reporters to abandon their calls. Further, an analysis of the pattern of calls by hour of the day and day of the week show that staffing schedules could be improved to better match the call center demand. The volume of abandoned calls puts the County at risk of allowing abuse and neglect cases to go unreported and children to continue living in abusive and neglectful homes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Department of Family and Children's Services should:

- 1.1 Fill and assign seven vacant Social Worker III positions and one vacant Social Work Supervisor to the Child Abuse and Neglect (CAN) Reporting Center so that the Department would be able to answer and return all incoming reports of child abuse and neglect on a timely basis, thereby minimizing unreported instances in the County. Implementation of this recommendation may necessitate requesting funding for additional workstations which should be determined by the Department after revising its staffing schedules. (Priority 1)
- 1.2 As discussed in Section 5 and Recommendation 5.2, the Department should issue monthly management reports to the County Executive and Board of Supervisors to monitor the response rate at the CAN Reporting Center and service delivery in other bureaus. The response rate and reports should also include calls from law enforcement, most of which are currently not tracked, tabulated or reported. (Priority 1)
- 1.3 Optimize staffing schedules by hour of the day and day of the week so that there is sufficient staffing to meet work demand and reduce abandoned calls. The Department should meet and confer with the applicable employee labor organization to negotiate the implementation of the revised staffing schedules. (Priority 1)

The Board of Supervisors should:

- 1.4 Direct County Counsel to draft language to be introduced by the County's representatives in the Legislature, which would establish a Statewide mandate for counties to regularly report to the California Department of Social Services the number of calls received and responded to by each county's child abuse hotline. (Priority 2)

SAVINGS, BENEFITS AND COSTS

Implementation of Recommendations 1.1 and 1.2 would allocate more Department resources toward timely responding to reported abuse and neglect, as well as minimize unreported abuse and neglect, so that children living in unsafe environments can be taken into protective custody and social workers can work with families and children to ensure their welfare and safety. Answering all calls received would bring the County into compliance with State law.

Because the Department would fill existing vacant budgeted positions to implement Recommendation 1.1, the Department's operating budget would not be affected unless (1) all of the vacant Social Worker III positions were filled, and (2) it became necessary to add additional budgeted positions to enable the filling of such positions in order to staff the functions of the previously vacant positions that were filled and reassigned to the CAN Reporting Center.

Filling of the eight vacant positions, as recommended, would result in additional annual expenditures of approximately \$1,028,830 in salaries and benefits funded primarily from federal and State funds. The County General Fund cost is estimated to amount to about \$189,768. All of these funds have been appropriated in the FY 2013-14 budget, resulting in no budget impact from the implementation of this recommendation. The estimated General Fund share of costs is based on the actual average reimbursement of 81.6 percent received for Social Worker III positions and a Social Worker Supervisor position in the CAN Unit in FY 2012-13. This data was provided by the Chief Financial Officer of the Social Services Agency.

Implementation of Recommendation 1.1 may also result in some equipment and other capital costs of an undetermined amount. Adding staff should create the capacity for CAN to comply with the portion of State law that requires a response to all reports of alleged abuse and/or neglect.

Attachment 1.1 CAN Reporting Center Calls by Hour of Day vs Staffing Nov 2012 through February 2013

Hour of Day	Feb 2013	Jan 2013	Dec 2012	Nov 2012	Total	Distribution of Calls	Distribution of Staff	Surplus (Deficit)
7:00:00 AM	0	0	0	1	1	0.01%	0.00%	-0.01%
7:30:00 AM	5	1	6	4	16	0.18%	0.00%	-0.18%
8:00:00 AM	43	44	40	43	170	1.89%	3.54%	1.65%
8:30:00 AM	49	74	80	75	278	3.08%	3.54%	0.45%
9:00:00 AM	61	73	73	74	281	3.12%	3.62%	0.50%
9:30:00 AM	61	81	99	108	349	3.87%	3.62%	-0.25%
10:00:00 AM	91	82	100	132	405	4.49%	4.40%	-0.09%
10:30:00 AM	82	115	84	114	395	4.38%	4.40%	0.02%
11:00:00 AM	92	103	85	107	387	4.29%	4.72%	0.42%
11:30:00 AM	88	97	106	124	415	4.60%	4.72%	0.11%
12:00:00 PM	107	108	112	146	473	5.25%	2.28%	-2.97%
12:30:00 PM	112	110	101	104	427	4.74%	2.67%	-2.06%
1:00:00 PM	95	109	120	146	470	5.21%	6.13%	0.92%
1:30:00 PM	96	117	124	153	490	5.43%	6.13%	0.70%
2:00:00 PM	114	115	117	153	499	5.53%	5.42%	-0.11%
2:30:00 PM	107	131	140	130	508	5.63%	5.42%	-0.21%
3:00:00 PM	128	121	125	174	548	6.08%	5.90%	-0.18%
3:30:00 PM	118	118	109	166	511	5.67%	5.90%	0.23%
4:00:00 PM	98	120	117	125	460	5.10%	5.42%	0.32%
4:30:00 PM	96	111	103	135	445	4.94%	4.72%	-0.22%
5:00:00 PM	84	73	89	112	358	3.97%	2.04%	-1.93%
5:30:00 PM	73	45	51	82	251	2.78%	2.28%	-0.50%
6:00:00 PM	45	38	24	46	153	1.70%	2.52%	0.82%
6:30:00 PM	35	34	23	40	132	1.46%	2.59%	1.13%
7:00:00 PM	36	24	32	44	136	1.51%	1.81%	0.30%
7:30:00 PM	30	33	44	31	138	1.53%	1.81%	0.28%
8:00:00 PM	24	29	28	34	115	1.28%	1.49%	0.22%
8:30:00 PM	24	21	26	23	94	1.04%	1.49%	0.45%
9:00:00 PM	14	22	25	18	79	0.88%	0.71%	-0.17%
9:30:00 PM	8	13	6	5	32	0.35%	0.71%	0.35%
Grand Total	2,016	2,162	2,189	2,649	9,016	100.00%	100.00%	

Most Understaffed Periods:

12:00 pm to 12:30 pm	-2.97%
12:30 pm to 1:00 pm	-2.06%
5:00 pm to 5:30 pm	-1.93%

Most Overstaffed Periods:

8:00 am to 8:30 am	1.65%
6:30 pm to 7:00 pm	1.13%
1:00 pm to 1:30 pm	0.92%
6:00 pm to 6:30 pm	0.82%
1:30 pm to 2:00 pm	0.70%

Attachment 1.2
CAN Reporting Center Staffing Schedule vs Calls by Day of Week*

Hour of Day	One-Half Hour Shift Staffing by Day of Week							Total
	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	
7:00:00 AM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
7:30:00 AM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
8:00:00 AM	9	9	9	9	8	0	1	45
8:30:00 AM	9	9	9	9	8	0	1	45
9:00:00 AM	9	9	9	9	8	1	1	46
9:30:00 AM	9	9	9	9	8	1	1	46
10:00:00 AM	11	11	11	11	10	1	1	56
10:30:00 AM	11	11	11	11	10	1	1	56
11:00:00 AM	11	12	12	12	11	1	1	60
11:30:00 AM	11	12	12	12	11	1	1	60
12:00:00 PM	5	6	6	5	5	1	1	29
12:30:00 PM	6	7	7	6	5	1	2	34
1:00:00 PM	14	16	16	15	14	1	2	78
1:30:00 PM	14	16	16	15	14	1	2	78
2:00:00 PM	12	14	14	13	12	2	2	69
2:30:00 PM	12	14	14	13	12	2	2	69
3:00:00 PM	14	15	15	14	13	2	2	75
3:30:00 PM	14	15	15	14	13	2	2	75
4:00:00 PM	12	14	14	13	12	2	2	69
4:30:00 PM	10	12	12	12	12	2	0	60
5:00:00 PM	4	5	6	5	5	1	0	26
5:30:00 PM	5	6	6	5	5	1	1	29
6:00:00 PM	5	7	6	6	6	1	1	32
6:30:00 PM	5	7	7	6	6	1	1	33
7:00:00 PM	3	5	5	4	4	1	1	23
7:30:00 PM	3	5	5	4	4	1	1	23
8:00:00 PM	3	4	4	3	3	1	1	19
8:30:00 PM	3	4	4	3	3	1	1	19
9:00:00 PM	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	9
9:30:00 PM	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	9
Total Half Hour Shifts	226	258	258	240	224	32	34	1,272

FTE (9 hr) Shifts Scheduled by Day of Week**	12.56	14.33	14.33	13.33	12.44	1.78	1.89	70.67
Average Calls by Day of Week (non-holidays)	88	110	106	120	105	20	15	564
% of Staffing	17.8%	20.3%	20.3%	18.9%	17.6%	2.5%	2.7%	100.0%
% of Calls	15.6%	19.5%	18.7%	21.3%	18.7%	3.5%	2.7%	100.0%
Staffing Surplus (Deficit)	2.2%	0.8%	1.6%	-2.5%	-1.1%	-1.0%	0.0%	

* Staffing schedule as of May 2013. Calls based on November 1, 2012 through February 28, 2013

** Does not account for vacation, sick leave or other nonproductive time.

Section 2. Improving Emergency Response Caseload Standards and Scheduling

Background

- **Child abuse and neglect reports received by the Department of Family and Children’s Services (DFCS) are initially investigated by the Emergency Response (ER) Division, consisting of seven units organized into separate day and swing shifts. Referrals outside these shifts are investigated by staff who respond on an on-call basis.**

Problem

- **The most recent labor agreement (effective 2011) reduced caseload standards from 21 to 14 cases per worker in anticipation of a proposed merger of the ER Division with the Court Intervention (Dependency Investigations) Division. This merger was supposed to result in 80 staff with 14 cases apiece. However, the merger never occurred, leaving the 51 staff in the ER Division with reduced caseload of 14 cases each, creating an artificial staffing shortfall. Furthermore, the current 1 p.m.-10 p.m. swing shift does not optimally match staffing to workload.**

Adverse Effect

- **Reduced caseload standards result in extra cases being referred to staff working overtime. ER overtime hours increased by 59 percent between FY 2010-11 and FY 2011-12 (from 7,529 hours in FY 2010-11 to 11,961 hours in FY 2011-12) resulting in a \$248,000 increase in overtime pay, despite the addition of eight new full-time staff in the same period. Also, there is high staff turnover in the 1 p.m.-10 p.m. swing shift.**

Recommendations, Savings and Benefits

- **DFCS should meet and confer with the relevant labor organization to increase the current ER caseload standard, based on the failure to merge ER with Dependency Investigations. (It is noted that four of five comparable counties surveyed exceeded DFCS’ current 14-case standard.) DFCS also should adjust swing shift scheduled hours as described in this section, which would reduce the number of cases requiring overtime work. A return to FY 2010-11 overtime use would save approximately \$248,000 annually.**

Emergency Response Functions and Staffing

Child abuse and neglect reports that are determined to represent potentially valid incidents of abuse or neglect are referred to the Emergency Response Division, part of the Front-End Bureau, for initial investigation. The Division typically receives 500 to 700 referrals per month. Responses occur in three time frames: 1) an immediate response in coordination with police in the jurisdiction where the alleged incident is occurring (“joint response”); 2) response by an ER social worker within two hours after the referral is received (“immediate response”), or; 3) a response within 10 days for allegations that are deemed less serious.

Section 2. Improving Emergency Response Caseload Standards & Scheduling

According to Welfare and Institutions Code 16501(f), county child welfare services departments shall make an “immediate” in-person response in emergency situations in accordance with regulations of the department. While the code does not define “immediate,” Santa Clara County and other entities have interpreted “immediate” to mean within 24 hours. However, DFCS policy and procedures define “immediate” at a higher standard of “as soon as possible and within two hours.”

The responding ER worker investigates the allegations, and determines whether the child or children involved should be placed in protective custody. The most serious cases, where protective custody is required, are then transferred by the ER worker to the Dependency Investigations (DI) staff that prepare legal documents seeking Dependency Court adjudication of the case. Less serious cases addressed by informal supervision, voluntary family maintenance or reunification, none of which require Court action, are transferred to a worker who will supervise the family in either the Informal Supervision unit of the Dependency Investigations Division, Service Bureau B, Service Bureau C, South County Services Bureau, or Family Resource Centers.

The Emergency Response Division consists of seven units, each supervised by a Social Work Supervisor, with five to nine Social Worker III positions per unit, for a total of 51 line staff positions. A separate Emergency Response staff of seven Social Worker IIIs works out of the DFCS South County Services Bureau. One of the seven units consists entirely of bilingual Spanish-speaking staff, and a second has five of six such positions. Five of the seven units work a day shift, from 8 a.m.-5 p.m., Monday through Friday. Two units work a swing shift, assigned 1 p.m.-10 p.m., Monday through Friday. Outside these assigned shifts, including all weekends and holidays, emergency response occurs via the After Hours Program, in which Emergency Response Division staff agree to be on-call to respond to referrals as needed. Participants receive \$33 on-call pay for each shift, ranging from six- to eight-hours each, they are on call, and receive overtime pay for any actual hours worked responding to a referral.

Change in Caseloads Has Created Artificial Staffing Shortfalls and Higher Overtime Costs

In 2010, DFCS management proposed combining the Emergency Response and Dependency Investigations Divisions, believing that it made sense for the social worker who responded to and investigated a referral, and determined a child should be taken into custody, to prepare the legal documents for Dependency Court authorization of that action, and to argue in favor of protective custody before the court. Based on 2009 Emergency Response and Dependency Investigations caseloads, a DFCS workgroup determined that with 80 social workers, an appropriate mixed caseload included approximately nine emergency response referrals and one dependency investigation case. However, the workgroup proposed a caseload standard of 13 emergency response referrals per month.

During collective bargaining negotiations, the Department agreed to reduce the caseload standard for social workers from 21 cases assigned to a worker during a 21-day period (roughly corresponding to a month of regular shift days), to 14 cases, as described in Section 9.9(2) of Appendix G of the current Service Employees International Union Local 521 contract. The difference between the 13 cases recommended by the workgroup and the 14 cases in the contract

Section 2. Improving Emergency Response Caseload Standards & Scheduling

was the result of these negotiations. This contract went into effect on July 25, 2011. In addition, under Section 9.6(a) of Appendix G, social workers handling an entire caseload of non-English speaking clients may be assigned only 80 percent of the caseload standard, or a maximum of 11 cases per month.

Section 9.9(1) of Appendix G of the 2011 labor agreement indicates that the standard may be an “interim standard” that would be “subject to changes pending the DFCS Practice Changes, and the changes will be subject to meet and confer prior to the implementation of any changes.” The contract does not indicate whether the referenced “Practice Changes” included the as-yet unimplemented merger of Emergency Response and Dependency Investigations. Department management asserts that the reduced caseloads were not related to the plan to combine the units. However, based on the workgroup record, we believe that the change was made based on the assumption of 80 staff that would result from the combination of the two units.

At the time of the change in caseload standards, 47 budgeted Full-Time-Equivalent Emergency Response social workers were receiving 19 to 22 referrals per month, according to the day-to-day manager of the Division. While the transmittal to the Board of Supervisors only included a summary of the contract changes and side letters at the time the Board approved the contract, it is unclear if the Board was made aware that the proposed caseload standards were based on the assumption of approximately 80 social workers available to handle emergency response referrals.

Cases that exceed the 14-case standard cannot be assigned to the regular caseloads of ER social workers and therefore are assigned to workers who accept them in return for working and being paid for overtime. Management reports that overtime is typically assigned during the second half of each month. While overtime was initially offered to social workers who volunteered to work it, the Front-End Bureau manager subsequently instituted mandatory overtime to bilingual Spanish-speaking social workers to adequately respond to referrals involving Spanish-speaking clients.

The effect of the need to handle referrals using overtime is shown in the table on the following page, which compares overtime hours and costs in the past three fiscal years.

Table 2.1
Emergency Response
Overtime Hours and Pay, FY 2010 through FY 2012

	FY 2009-10	FY 2010-11	FY 2011-12²
Overtime Hours	9,609	7,528	11,961
Overtime Pay	\$489,750	\$373,849	\$619,252
Overtime Differentials ¹	\$55,993	\$51,605	\$53,741
Total	\$545,743	\$425,454	\$672,993
FTE per Dollars	4.31	3.36	5.31

Source: Payroll data

¹ Overtime Differentials include overtime meal allowances, call duty, intake and lead differentials on non-PERS hours.

² Overtime hours and pay include overtime for four Dependency Investigations cases handled by three Emergency Response staff.

As the table illustrates, overtime hours increased from 7,528 in FY 2010-11, to 11,961 in FY 2011-12, an increase of 58.9 percent. Costs similarly increased in that time, by \$247,539, or 58.2 percent. In short, it appears the overall Emergency Response workload has not changed, but the way it is paid for has, because workload that used to be paid for as part of the base pay for social workers in this Division is now paid for through overtime. It should be noted that in 2011, a unit of eight social workers was transferred from the Dependency Investigations Division to the Emergency Response Division to meet ER caseload demands. However, even with the additional social workers to meet caseload demands, overtime pay increased in the following year.

Swing Shifts Have Created Employee Retention Problems

There are two swing shifts of staff working from 1 p.m.-10 p.m., Monday-Friday. According to Emergency Response Division staff, both swing shifts have experienced retention problems because of their schedules. Staff newly promoted to Social Worker III, and assigned to these shifts, will typically apply for other positions within the Department as soon as they are able. When departures occur, the result is higher caseloads for staff that remain, and continuing costs for recruitment, hiring and training to fill vacancies. Turnover occurs despite the workers receiving an additional \$2.65 per hour during the 2 p.m.-10 p.m. portion of their shift, as required by the union contract. In Calendar Year 2012, nine of the ER Division's positions became vacant. Four of these (44 percent) were assigned to one of the swing shifts. The following table depicts the effect of staff turnover on actual versus budgeted staffing in the swing shift units during Calendar Year 2012. As a result, far fewer staff than were intended were actually available to work these shifts, as shown in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2
Swing Shift Unit Budgeted Versus Actual Staffing
Calendar Year 2012, By Month and Average for the Year

2012 Actual Staffing	ER 7	ER 8
January	2	6
February	2	6
March	2	6
April	5	5
May	2	4
June	4	4
July	3	4
August	2	5
September	2	5
October	2	5
November	3	2
December	5	6
Average	2.8	4.8
Budgeted	6.0	7.0
Average Actual as a Percent of Budget	46.7%	68.6%

Source: Emergency Response 2012 caseload statistics and staff rosters provided by division

As the table shows, during 2012 actual staffing for Subunit ER 7 averaged less than half the number of budgeted positions, while actual staffing for ER 8 averaged slightly more than two-thirds of what was budgeted. Since the only way for referrals to be investigated with reduced staff, under the current caseload standards, is to assign them to staff who agree to respond in return for receiving overtime pay, the vacancies have increased the use of overtime. This problem is particularly acute in ER 7, which is designated a bilingual unit working with Spanish-speaking clients. According to the Department, about 60 percent of the families it serves are of Latino heritage, and therefore would be likely to require assistance from a bilingual Spanish-speaking social worker.

Proposed Policies to Properly Match Staffing to Workload

To address the retention problem, Emergency Response Division staff suggested changing the current swing shift schedule to 11 a.m.-8 p.m., which they believe is more reasonable for workers. Under the current system, a swing shift worker could receive a Joint Response referral as late as 9:30 p.m., which may result in them working until midnight. Any hours worked beyond their shift is paid with overtime.

We believe the change proposed by staff would result in a mismatch between workload and staff resources, and therefore would increase the use of overtime. However, the following table,

Section 2. Improving Emergency Response Caseload Standards & Scheduling

showing the volume of calls from the Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Center (CAN) by time of day, indicates some adjustment is possible.¹

Table 2.3

**Average Volume of Calls to CAN,
from November 2012 through February 2013**

Time	Calls		Answered		Voice mail	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Before 8 AM	4	0.2%	1	0.1%	0	0.1%
8 AM - 8:59 AM	112	4.9%	76	6.1%	14	2.8%
9 AM - 9:59 AM	158	6.9%	95	7.6%	25	5.1%
10 AM - 10:59 AM	200	8.8%	115	9.2%	42	8.6%
11 AM - 11:59 AM	201	8.8%	106	8.6%	38	7.6%
12 PM - 12:59 PM	225	9.9%	118	9.5%	46	9.4%
1 PM - 1:59 PM	240	10.5%	150	12.1%	45	9.1%
2 PM - 2:59 PM	252	11.1%	143	11.5%	49	10.0%
3 PM - 3:59 PM	296	13.0%	157	12.6%	73	14.9%
4 PM - 4:59 PM	226	9.9%	95	7.6%	63	12.8%
5 PM - 5:59 PM	137	6.0%	57	4.6%	40	8.1%
6 PM - 6:59 PM	71	3.1%	42	3.4%	19	3.9%
7 PM - 7:59 PM	77	3.4%	44	3.6%	16	3.3%
8 PM - 8:59 PM	52	2.3%	28	2.2%	14	2.8%
9 PM - 9:59 PM	28	1.2%	14	1.2%	8	1.7%
Total	2,278	100.0%	1,238	100.0%	491	100.0%
Total and Percent From 12 - 9 PM	1,576	69.2%	832	67.2%	364	74.2%

Source: Call Center data provided by the Department

As the table shows, an estimated 69 percent of the roughly 2,280 calls received by CAN occur between noon and 9 p.m. Within those hours, the staff answered 832 calls and another 364 went to voice mail, and may be processed by the staff. Combined, these are about 76 percent of calls received. This suggests that about 76 percent of referrals to ER staff for investigation are probably made during this time. Therefore, we recommend that swing shift hours for the Emergency Response Division be initially started one hour earlier, beginning at 12 p.m. and ending at 9 p.m. Assuming the recommendations regarding CAN in Section 1 have the expected effect of more referrals being made to ER earlier in the day, a further change, to the 11 a.m. starting time proposed by staff, could subsequently be considered. These changes would result in fewer referrals needing to be assigned to staff on overtime, thus potentially reducing staff turnover.

¹ We are using call data to approximate when referrals to the Emergency Response occur because the ER Division does not track what time of day referrals were assigned to social workers.

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In addition, we recommend the Department, via the meet-and-confer process provided in the union contract, seek a higher caseload standard than the current 14 cases per Emergency Response social worker per month. The change from the previous standard, which was 50 percent higher than the current standard, was supposed to reflect the merger of Emergency Response and Dependency Investigations functions, which never occurred. We note that in 2012, actual caseloads averaged 15 referrals per social worker per month, and ranged from 13 to 17 per social worker in one of the day shift units. Furthermore, a survey of comparable counties found that Alameda, Monterey, San Mateo and Los Angeles counties, which have separate caseload standards for Emergency Response referrals, had higher caseload standards than Santa Clara County.

The combination of these changes should substantially reduce overtime pay costs in the Emergency Response Division, which totaled about \$673,000 in FY 2011-2012. If these changes merely resulted in returning overtime costs to the level of fiscal year 2010-11, costs would fall to about \$425,000, for a savings of about \$248,000 annually. Additional savings would occur not only if overtime hours fell to the FY 2010-11 level, but if Emergency Response management needed fewer staff to be on-call, based on fewer cases needing to be worked on overtime, thereby reducing the overtime differentials costs, including on-call pay, that have averaged slightly more than \$50,000 annually in each of the last three fiscal years.

We note that these recommendations also reflect the proposed changes in the Call Center operation discussed in Section 1, and the organizational changes recommended in Section 5, which include combining the call center and the Emergency Response Division under a single Social Services Program Manager III that is responsible for and experienced in both functions.

CONCLUSION

New Emergency Response caseload standards agreed to by the Department of Family and Children's Services, based on a proposed reorganization of functions which has never actually occurred, have resulted in increased overtime hours and costs, which increased about 59 percent from FY 2010-11 to FY 2011-12, following the implementation of the reduced caseloads in July 2011. Furthermore, the current 1 p.m.-10 p.m. schedule of the Emergency Response swing shift does not optimally match staffing to workload, since about two-thirds of child abuse reports are actually received between 12 p.m.-9 p.m. Staff turnover on those shifts is high. Actual staffing on those shifts is only about half to two-thirds of the budgeted staffing, which further exacerbates the overtime problem.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Department of Family and Children's Services should:

- 2.1 Adjust swing shift hours for Emergency Response Division staff to 12 p.m.-9 p.m., from the current 1 p.m.-10 p.m., with a further adjustment to an 11 a.m. start considered if the CAN Call Center recommendations in Section 1 are successful. (Priority 2)

Section 2. Improving Emergency Response Caseload Standards & Scheduling

- 2.2 Through the meet-and-confer process provided in the current union contract, seek a higher caseload standard than the current 14 cases per Emergency Response social worker per month. (Priority 1)

SAVINGS, BENEFITS AND COSTS

These recommendations would more accurately match Emergency Response staffing to workload, by placing more of the existing workload within the base pay duties of staff, rather than requiring it be performed in return for overtime pay. A reduction of overtime pay to the level achieved in Fiscal Year 2010-11 would result in savings of about \$248,000 annually, with additional savings possible if the actual overtime hours were further reduced, and the number and/or frequency of staff receiving overtime differentials, including on-call pay, which averaged slightly more than \$50,000 annually in the past three years, were reduced.

Section 3. Court Intervention Caseloads and Staffing

Background

- The Superior Court reviews most Department of Family and Children's Services (DFCS) decisions to place a child into protective custody. The DFCS Court Intervention (Dependency Investigations or DI) Division presents these cases to the Court. In Calendar Year 2012, the Division received 855 new cases, and processed an unknown number of cases initiated in 2011. An average of 23 full-time-equivalent (FTE) staff, plus an average of 4.7 FTE of overtime positions, processed these court-mandated cases. In total, Dependency Investigations staff receive about 2.6 new cases per month and carry an average total caseload of about four court cases at any given time.

Problem

- Due to staff leaves of absence, transfers to other DFCS bureaus, and resignations, only an average of 23 staff members were assigned cases throughout 2012, 41 percent less than the 39 positions that were budgeted. Once vacant, positions remained vacant for an average of four months, and caseloads were increasing in the latter portion of the year. Further, while the DI Division was understaffed due to vacancies, social workers in two other bureaus were underutilized.

Adverse Effect

- Due to the staffing shortfall, overtime hours equivalent to 4.7 FTE positions costing \$594,675 were used to staff Dependency Investigations cases, with total overtime costs of \$594,675 in Fiscal Year 2011-12. Also, other Dependency Investigations work on 17 cases was assigned to social workers with other duties. Despite these additional resources, most deadlines for case plans were missed by an average of more than two months and Court report deadlines were missed more than eight percent of the time.

Recommendations, Savings and Benefits

- By reassigning five Dependency Investigations social workers currently assigned to lower priority voluntary cases, and transferring their caseload to underutilized bureaus with additional capacity, the DI Division could reduce annual overtime costs by an estimated \$250,764. In addition, DFCS should request the Employee Service Agency (ESA) to evaluate the causes of the high turnover in the DI Division and report its findings and recommendations to the Board of Supervisors. Implementation of these recommendations would enable DFCS to improve service delivery, better protect the safety and welfare of abused and neglected youth, and reduce its costs.

Dependency Investigations Functions and Staffing

When the Department of Family and Children's Services decides to place a child's family under a social worker's supervision, that decision usually¹ must be reviewed by the Superior Court.

¹ One exception to court involvement is a situation in which the family voluntarily agrees to DFCS oversight.

Section 3. Court Intervention Caseloads and Staffing

While the decision is being reviewed by the Court, the child could remain with the parents, or in more serious cases, taken into protective custody.

Once the initial investigation and action on a report of abuse and neglect is conducted by the Emergency Response Division discussed in Section 2, the case is transferred to the Dependency Investigations Division, where social workers conduct a more thorough investigation including interviewing the child or children, parents, the reporter of the alleged child abuse and neglect and any other person with recent interaction with the child or children. After the investigation, the Dependency Investigations social worker could choose to return the child home, recommend voluntary services, or pursue court action. Conversely, the Dependency Investigations social worker could identify greater risk for a child for whom an Emergency Response social worker deemed it would be safe to remain in the home while a petition for formal social work supervision occurred, and pursue removal from the home. If court action is pursued, the Dependency Investigations social worker prepares required documents for the Court, including court reports and a case plan describing the steps to be taken to resolve the case.

According to a January 2012 roster, there were 39 budgeted positions² in Dependency Investigations available to take court cases. In addition to these social workers, there is another unit of seven social workers that handle less serious, voluntary cases that do not require court intervention, as discussed above. However, caseload statistics reports indicate that fewer staff members were actually available to handle court cases due to leave of absences, transfers, and resignations.

² The January 2012 roster included an additional unit of eight social workers, but Department staff confirmed that this unit was transferred to the Emergency Response division in 2011 to perform the initial investigations in response to reports of abuse and neglect. These eight are not included in the count of 39.

Table 3.1

**Dependency Investigations New Cases
and Court Case-Carrying Staff
Calendar Year (CY) 2012**

Month	New Cases	Total Staff	New Cases Per Staff Person
January	50	32.0	1.6
February	68	25.0	2.7
March	59	21.0	2.8
April	88	28.0	3.1
May	72	19.0	3.8
June	66	22.0	3.0
July	64	22.0	2.9
August	80	19.0	4.2
September	52	20.0	2.6
October	94	22.0	4.3
November	90	22.0	4.1
December	72	25.0	2.9
Total	855		
Average, Jan.-Aug.	68.4	23.5	3.0
Average, Sept.-Dec.	77	22.3	3.5
Average, CY 2012	71.25	23.1	2.9³

Sources: Sample of 12 months of caseload statistics reports and data on new cases provided by DFCS

As the table shows, during the first nine months of Calendar Year 2012, the number of new cases assigned per staff member averaged between 2.5 and three per month. However, a significant increase in new cases in October and November vastly increased average caseloads to more than four per staff during those months. Although six additional staff were hired in October to fill existing vacant positions, the capacity of new staff to receive caseloads was limited by training requirements. Overall during the months of October through December 2012, 3.5 new cases per position were assigned per month, compared with an average of 3.0 new assignments per position during the first nine months of the year, an increase of 16.7 percent in the average monthly volume of new assignments.

In addition to newly assigned cases requiring court action, Dependency Investigations staff caseloads also include cases that are awaiting adjudication. For example, we observed instances

³ The average including overtime FTEs is 2.6. The average excluding overtime FTEs is 2.9.

Section 3. Court Intervention Caseloads and Staffing

in the Juvenile Dependency Court in which defense attorneys representing parents requested a continuance of court hearings on the basis that they had received social workers' reports too late to review them with the parents. An analysis of overall caseload summary reports and payroll data indicates that Dependency Investigations social workers have an average caseload of four cases per month, three newly assigned cases and one case carried over from previous assignments.

Hearing Schedules and Reporting Deadlines Contribute to Overtime Costs

The timing of hearings and legally mandated timelines for petitions, coupled with fluctuations in staff availability, create challenges in assigning new cases. For example, when a child is removed from their legal guardian's custody, the assigned Dependency Investigations social worker must file, within two court days, a petition seeking the court's authority to remove the child. Three days after removal of a child, a Detention Hearing is scheduled in which the Court rules whether the removal was appropriate. Assuming the initial detention is upheld, the social worker then has 15 court days to prepare a report for the Jurisdiction Hearing, in which the Court determines whether the allegations of abuse and neglect are true, and the Disposition Hearing, in which the court determines whether to make the minor(s) involved dependent(s) of the Court, and orders preparation of a plan to address the causes of the abuse or neglect. The Disposition Hearing may be held at the same time as the Jurisdiction Hearing, or can be set separately. If held separately, it may occur up to 10 days later for children who are in protective custody, or up to 30 days later for children who have been returned to the guardian's care, under DFCS supervision.

These deadlines cannot be altered, so that if a Dependency Investigations social worker is sick, on vacation, or otherwise unavailable during the three court days following a child's detention, they cannot be assigned the case because of the deadlines. Furthermore, in September, 2013, the Board of Supervisors approved a caseload standard of no more than five families at one time for Dependency Investigations staff. The labor agreement specifies that the County and labor union will meet after six months or sooner to assess the standard. The current agreement also states the intent to "distribute the cases as equally as possible, taking into consideration staff availability and language needs."

To meet court-mandated deadlines, Dependency Investigations social workers have used overtime hours. The change in that usage is shown in the following table.

Table 3.2

**Dependency Investigations Overtime Hours and Pay,
FY 2010 through FY 2012**

	FY 2009-10	FY 2010-11	FY 2011-12
Overtime Hours	5,402	5,657	10,061
Overtime Pay	\$309,974	\$325,414	\$573,519
Overtime Differentials*	\$14,957	\$18,497	\$21,156
Total	\$324,931	\$343,911	\$594,675
FTE per Dollars	2.56	2.71	4.69

Source: 2012 Payroll data

*Overtime Differentials include overtime meal allowances, call duty, intake and lead differentials on non-PERS hours. The cost per dollars is based on the total cost of a full-time position. Each overtime position is equivalent to 1.28 straight-time FTEs in terms of productive hours worked.

As the table shows, the overtime hours worked by Dependency Investigations social workers nearly doubled, from 5,657 hours in FY 2010-11, and a similar number in FY 2009-10, to 10,061 hours in FY 2011-12. Overtime costs also increased, by \$248,105, or 76.2 percent, in FY 2011-12.

Despite the use of overtime, other data showed Dependency Investigations social workers were unable to meet mandated deadlines. For example, case plans, which outline the concerns of the social worker, what parents can do to address the concerns and timeline to accomplish case plan goals, whether family maintenance, family reunification, or placement services, must be prepared and submitted to the court within 30 days of the first in-person contact with the child or before the Disposition Hearing, whichever comes first. However, a March 2013 compliance report found that of 108 case plans examined, 68, or 63 percent, were not submitted by the due date. Furthermore, nine of the 108 cases, 8.3 percent, did not have court reports submitted by mandated deadlines.

The compliance report is a snapshot in time, and according to DFCS supervisors, the reports may be a week behind actual actions taken. However, the average number of days the 68 cases were past due was 72 days, with days past due ranging from one day to 521 days. These figures are somewhat misleading. These figures include cases in which the child or parent(s) have left the County before a court hearing takes place. In such instances, according to supervisors, court reports are not due, but they appear in the data as missed deadlines. The number of such instances is not known. However, supervisors also report that it is common for staff to be noncompliant with the case plan deadline because they are prioritizing other responsibilities, such as meeting court report deadlines, ensuring supervised visits occur and identifying placements – all tasks that directly impact a child’s immediate safety, as opposed to documenting a case plan. The lack of sufficient staff to meet compliance measures and court mandated deadlines contributes to slower service delivery, among other things.

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In addition to assigning overtime hours to existing Dependency Investigations staff, this division also addressed its workload by assigning cases, on a voluntary overtime basis, to social workers outside the Division. From July through December 2012, 17 cases were assigned to eight social workers whose regular duties did not include Dependency Investigations functions. The overtime paid for this work was not paid from the Dependency Investigations Unit's budget, but from the budget of the bureau where the overtime worker was normally assigned. The costs of these 17 cases could not be determined, but is in addition to the \$573,519 paid to Dependency Investigations staff for overtime work in Fiscal Year 2011-12. This practice continued into FY 2012-13, with an additional 16 cases assigned to 12 social workers from other bureaus, on an overtime basis.

Staff Turnover is High

In Calendar Year 2012, 12 Social Worker II/III positions assigned to units managing court cases for Dependency Investigations were vacant at various times. Out of 39 budgeted positions in the January 2012 roster, this represents a one-year turnover rate of 30.8 percent. As of March 5, 2013, 10 of the 14 positions that were previously vacant had been filled. It took an average of 102 days, or about 3.4 months, to fill each position, although one position remained vacant for 273 days, or about nine months. Of the remaining four vacant positions, one was vacant for 155 days, and on average the four positions were vacant 123.5 days, about four months. High staff turnover rates, and delays in recruiting new staff, exacerbate the caseload problem, because caseloads assigned to staff who leave have to be reapportioned among the staff that remain.

Employee Service Agency staff reported that changes to the Department of Family and Children's Services recruiting procedures were approved by the Board of Supervisors in the September 2013 labor union contract. The revised procedures will allow the County to simultaneously recruit non-County employees to apply for positions in the Department while completing any necessary internal recruitment and transfers, as opposed to waiting for all internal recruitment and transfers to be completed before recruiting non-County employees. The intent of this change is to shorten the length of time a position remains vacant, though it is too early to determine the impact of these changes.

According to a June 2013 organizational chart and Dependency Investigations roster, there were 37 social workers – two fewer than in FY 2011-12 – budgeted to handle court cases. Five of the positions were vacant while two were noted as on leave of absence. As such, there are only 30 social workers available to take court cases, which is seven more than the average number of 23 social workers assigned to court cases in 2012. Given the significant use of overtime and volunteer staff from other bureaus in 2012, 30 social workers is an insufficient number of staff for handling Dependency Investigations caseloads.

Reallocating Informal Supervision Caseloads Could Alleviate Caseload Problems

As noted at the start of this section, in addition to processing cases that require court intervention, seven Dependency Investigations social workers also oversee less serious cases where a guardian, accused of abuse or neglect, voluntarily agrees to be supervised by the Department, either with or without the child removed from the guardian's custody. However, only 36.8 percent of such cases in 2012 were overseen by the Dependency Investigations

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Division. Another 45 percent of the cases were overseen by social workers in service bureaus, which supervise families whose cases have already been adjudicated by the Superior Court, and are proceeding under a Court-approved case plan to address the causes of the abuse and neglect that occurred. This indicates that social workers in the service bureaus have the experience and knowledge necessary to handle the informal supervision caseloads of the Dependency Investigations Division.

An analysis of average caseloads for social workers in the service bureaus indicate that non-Spanish speaking staff have the capacity to absorb the average informal supervision caseload of five non-Spanish speaking social workers in the Dependency Investigations Division. Under the current labor agreement, social workers have a mixed caseload not to exceed 30 children. Each type of case in the mixed caseload, whether family maintenance (child remains in the home), family reunification (child is temporarily placed out of the home), permanent placement (child permanently placed outside of the home), or informal supervision is assigned points, with social workers having a maximum caseload standard of 100 points.

In 2012, non-Spanish speaking social workers in Dependency Investigations with informal supervision cases had an average of 19 cases per month. This is equivalent to an average of 76 case points per social worker because informal supervision cases are assigned four points each. The total number of case points that would need to be redistributed for five Dependency Investigations workers is 380 (5 x 76). As shown in the table below, with capacity to take additional cases equivalent to 1,800 case points, the service bureaus have 4.7 times the capacity needed to absorb the informal supervision cases of Dependency Investigations staff.

Table 3.3

Average 2012 Capacity within Service Bureaus by Case Points per Productive FTE

	Productive FTE*	Average Cases per FTE	Average Case Points per FTE	Capacity in Points per FTE	Total Point Capacity per Bureau
Service Bureau B	41	18.4	84.4	15.6	639.6
Service Bureau C	31	14.7	65.2	34.8	1,078.8
Total					1,802.4

Sources: Analysis based on a sample of 12 months of caseload statistics reports provided DFCS

*The “Productive FTE” adjusts for staff vacancies, leave of absences, reduced caseload standards due to training for new hires, and other factors that limit the capacity of the bureau to take on caseloads commensurate with budgeted FTE.

In contrast, analysis of Spanish-speaking social workers’ caseloads in the service bureaus indicates that they are already above or near their maximum caseload standard of 80 case points, per union labor agreement. Therefore, they do not have the capacity to absorb the informal supervision caseload of Spanish-speaking Dependency Investigations social workers.

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According to the Department, the caseload management reports do not capture continuing social workers' entire caseload. While DFCS has confirmed that the caseload management reports include out-of-state children that are part of the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC), they do not include KinGAP⁴ cases assigned to social workers.

In September of 2013, the Board of Supervisors approved a revised contract for social workers that included a new caseload standard of an average of three to four KinGAP cases per social worker. Per the contract, each KinGAP case would be assigned .25 case weight points, resulting in an average of one additional case weight point if the social worker maintained an average of four KinGAP cases within their total caseload. Based on these contract standards, and a Department-wide caseload of 189 KinGAP cases, the continuing bureaus still have 4.6 times the capacity needed to absorb the informal supervision cases of Dependency Investigations staff.

Given the previous analysis in this section, including the need for overtime, the problems with staff turnover, and the problems meeting mandated deadlines for Court-mandated investigation and reporting, additional resources are needed for Court-mandated work in the Dependency Investigations Division. Accordingly, we recommend that five of the seven social workers in that unit that are now assigned solely to informal supervision caseloads of English-speaking clients, be reassigned to Court-mandated caseloads. This would create five additional Dependency Investigations workers to whom new Court-mandated cases could be assigned.

By tapping unused capacity in the other bureaus to increase work hours in the Dependency Investigations Unit, the Department would be able to save money by reducing overtime somewhat, while also increasing the total volume of work hours available. These additional resources, estimated at more than two FTEs, should provide a modest reduction in caseload size, thereby enabling the Dependency Investigations Unit to better meet Court deadlines.

Because staff in other bureaus serving Spanish-speaking clients are already handling the prescribed number of cases, the two Dependency Investigations social workers handling Spanish-speaking informal supervision cases should continue in that role, but should be transferred to one of the bureaus that primarily serves adjudicated continuing cases. The Department disagrees with this recommendation and would like to prioritize these two staff members for performing Emergency Response functions discussed in Section 2 of this report. However, the Department has not addressed how the existing Spanish-speaking informal supervision caseloads will be distributed to Spanish-speaking social workers in other bureaus. As previously stated, the Spanish-speaking social workers in the continuing bureaus are already above or near their maximum caseload standard of 80 case points, per union labor agreement.

Longer Term Solution to Staffing Shortage Should be Explored

While reassigning Dependency Investigations social workers with voluntary, informal supervision cases to court-related cases could alleviate caseload problems much more quickly than trying to fill remaining vacancies in the Division, the high turnover rate in the Division suggests that more long term solutions should be explored to maintain adequate staffing levels.

⁴ KinGAP refers to the Kinship Guardianship Assistance Payment Program which serves children exiting from the foster care system that enter a guardianship with a relative.

Section 3. Court Intervention Caseloads and Staffing

Therefore, the Employment Services Agency (ESA), in conjunction with the Social Services Agency's Human Resource division and DFCS should conduct a study to determine the causes of the high turnover among the Social Worker III positions that handle court cases in the Dependency Investigations Division, explore options for addressing these and report back to the Board of Supervisors. Examples of potential solutions to address the high turnover include additional training for managers and supervisors or a rotation process among specialized functions to prevent staff burnout, among other possibilities. ESA concurs that this recommendation can be accomplished, if approved.

CONCLUSION

The Dependency Investigations Division has not had sufficient staffing to meet the workload of cases requiring court intervention. The number of new cases assigned per staff member per month rose substantially in the last three months of Calendar Year 2012. Use of overtime and assignment of such cases outside of the Dependency Investigations Division have increased, raising costs, but legally required deadlines continue to be missed on some cases.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Department of Family and Children's Services should:

- 3.1 Reassign five of the seven staff now assigned to oversee informal supervision cases within the Dependency Investigations Division to receive cases requiring court intervention. Two Dependency Investigations staff who oversee informal supervision cases for Spanish-speaking clients should continue to do so, but should be transferred to Continuing Service Bureaus B or C. (Priority 1)
- 3.2 Reassign the informal supervision caseloads of the five positions discussed in Recommendation 3.1 to staff in the Continuing Services Bureaus B or C, which have capacity to accept additional informal supervision cases. (Priority 1)
- 3.3 In conjunction with the Employment Service Agency and Social Services Agency's Human Resource division, conduct a study to determine the causes of the high turnover among the Social Worker III positions that handle court cases in the Dependency Investigations Division, explore options for addressing these and report back to the Board of Supervisors. (Priority 2)

SAVINGS, BENEFITS AND COSTS

Recommendation 3.1 would provide new resources to process Dependency Investigations cases requiring court intervention, reducing caseloads for the existing staff, who would then be able to meet mandated deadlines with less or no overtime. A reduction of overtime hours to level used in Fiscal Year 2010-11 would provide savings of \$250,764 annually. Additional savings would occur if Dependency Investigations cases no longer need to be worked by staff from other bureaus on overtime. Meeting mandated deadlines would ensure that legal processes needed to protect the safety of children at risk for abuse and neglect are properly followed. Also, reducing

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overtime hours by making staff caseloads more manageable should improve morale, reducing the staff retention problem that has exacerbated the caseload management problem.

Section 4. Receiving, Assessment and Intake Center (RAIC)

Background

- The Receiving, Assessment and Intake Center (RAIC) receives and evaluates children removed from parental custody due to allegations of child abuse or neglect. Once admitted to the Center, State law requires these children be placed in a foster home or other alternative living situation within 24 hours. Children's Counselors provide child care to incoming youth and are present at all times. Social workers responsible for placing youth are on-site during limited hours.

Problem

- Although RAIC is staffed from 7 a.m.-9 p.m. weekdays and 9 a.m.-6 p.m. weekends by social workers who can assist in finding placements, the Department of Family and Children's Services' expert staff for placement and foster home recruitment are located elsewhere, and are only available to assist RAIC staff during weekday business hours. Furthermore, RAIC counselors have limited alternate duties when children are not present, and are therefore underutilized.

Adverse Effect

- Separating DFCS' Placement and RAIC staff has contributed to unnecessary delays placing children received at the Center, particularly those whose medical conditions or behaviors make them difficult to place. In January 2013, the County of Santa Clara became one of only two California counties that operate receiving centers to be cited for the unlicensed care of children. Between January 2012 and May 2013, there were 32 separate instances when children have remained at the RAIC over 24 hours. While two-thirds of these youth remained at the Center less than 3 days, two youth remained at the center for more than 28 days in 2012. Such non-compliance is detrimental to children housed at RAIC and exposes the Department to potential lawsuits.

Recommendations, Savings and Benefits

- By restructuring the Family and Permanency Bureau through combining the Foster Home Recruitment and Placement units with the Receiving Center under one manager, DFCS could better align its foster home recruitment efforts with the needs of RAIC youth. Further, DFCS should delete 17 Children's Counselor positions and add 11 Social Worker I positions or consider contracting out the operations of the Receiving Center as described in this section. Either alternative would increase the cost effectiveness of the RAIC while improving the Department's focus on placement and the creation of a long-term strategic plan for intake, assessment and placement of abused and neglected children entering the child welfare system.

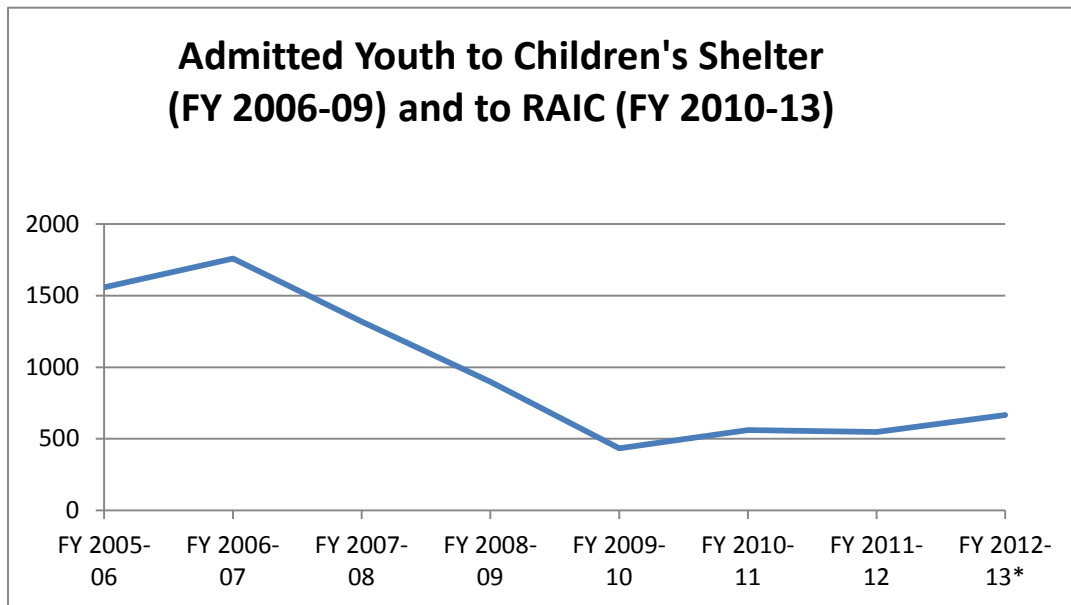
RAIC Operations

From 1995 to 2009, the County operated a residential Children's Shelter, which provided temporary residential care for abused and neglected youth. As the Shelter population decreased

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and child welfare best practices shifted away from residential children’s shelters, the County decided to cease Shelter operations and transition to a short-term, temporary receiving center. The Receiving, Assessment and Intake Center (RAIC) operated at the former Shelter site until January 2013, when operations were relocated to a confidential facility in downtown San Jose, which the Department intends to be a temporary facility for three to five years. This 24-hour facility is sometimes the first destination for children removed from parental custody following allegations of child abuse or neglect, when there are no immediately identified alternative placement options. At the Center, children receive medical and mental health assessments prior to being placed with a relative, foster family or other emergency placement while the Department investigates the abuse or neglect allegations. Chart 4.1 shows the number of youth admitted to the shelter and later to the RAIC by year.

Chart 4.1



Source: FY 2006-13 annual intake logs.

*Note: FY 2012-13 data includes admit information only through May 2013.

RAIC is managed by a Social Services Program Manager I (SSPM I). Since October 2011, this position has been vacant, and a Social Work Supervisor has been working out of class to manage the Center. The SSPM I staffs the Center from 12:30 – 9 p.m. on weekdays and is on-call 24 hours a day, seven days a week. In total, 33 line staff positions support RAIC operations. These positions include:

- 17 Children’s Counselors (including two Senior Children’s Counselors) working alternate schedules to staff the center at all times, regardless of whether the Center is vacant or occupied with admitted youth.
- 6 Social Worker IIIs, which comprise the Assessment Center Unit. This unit conducts behavioral assessments, processes and places admitted youth, which includes researching

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possible family members who may be able to foster the admitted child. RAIC's team of Social Worker IIIs is responsible for identifying placements for all non-dependent youth, meaning youth who, prior to entry at RAIC, did not have an open case with DFCS. These social workers also assist the Department's Court Intervention Services bureau by helping locate parents of dependent children.

- 2 Social Work Supervisors, one overseeing the Children's Counselor Unit, and the other overseeing the Assessment Center Unit. Both supervisor positions were vacant at the time of the audit.

The RAIC processes two types of youth: admits, meaning children who are removed from their caregiver's custody and physically enter the Center, and intakes (also called temporary custodies), meaning youth who are removed by DFCS social workers but are placed directly with a foster parent, group home or relative without physically entering the RAIC. For both populations, RAIC staff process the paperwork associated with these removals. In 2012, the Center physically admitted 635 youth and processed paperwork for 331 temporary custodies. From January 1, 2013 to May 31, 2013, the Center admitted 301 youth and processed 122 intakes. Of the total 1,389 youth served by RAIC between January 2012 and May 2013, including all admits and intakes, it is noted that 1,342 youth or 97 percent were placed within 24 hours; the remaining 46 youth served (or 3 percent) required more than 24 hours to find an adequate placement.

According to RAIC intake logs, in 2012, the Center was vacant for 65 days of the calendar year. This means that for more than two months in 2012, no youth were admitted to the Center.¹ Between January and May 2013, there were 31 days when the Center received no new admits. However, statistics on the number and demographics of youth admitted to RAIC, including the number of days the Center was vacant, are not tracked consistently. Counselors and social workers take down information from youth upon arrival on paper, which is later transferred to a daily spreadsheet and is a process prone to error. Because admit data is tracked on a daily basis, a management analyst in the Administrative Support Bureau must manually compile daily data to generate any kind of monthly or annual statistical summary for management. This process is further complicated because social workers and counselors do not consistently input data. For example, there is no set convention on inputting the time of entry or exit for youth entering RAIC or when youth remain at the RAIC over 24 hours. While there is a code list for reporting a child's ethnicity, language, reason for intake, workers do not apply the same codes consistently, which distorts what little data is available about the RAIC admit and intake population.

¹ For the purpose of this discussion, "vacant" is defined to mean that no new admits were received in RAIC. It is possible that a youth from a previous day remained over 24 hours at the Center, but given the limitations on how RAIC data is collected, it is difficult to determine the number of these instances of overlap.

Violations of State Law and Citation by the California Department of Social Services

Only nine of California's 58 counties² (including Santa Clara) operate Receiving Centers.³ Because these facilities are not licensed by the State as "child care facilities," children who enter the RAIC must be placed within 24 hours. Between January 2012 and May 2013, there were 32 separate incidents when 46 youth remained at the Center longer than 24 hours, which is in violation of the Health and Safety Code.

On February 1, 2013, the County was formally cited by the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) Community Care Licensing Division for operating a residential care facility without a valid license, which is required of all facilities providing childcare to youth for more than 24 hours. The citation was issued following an "unannounced visit/investigation" of a complaint received by CDSS on January 9, 2013. According to CDSS, of the nine counties that report operating a receiving center, only two counties (the County of Los Angeles and the County of Santa Clara) were cited for this violation in 2013 as of May. Following the citation, the County agreed to develop a corrective action plan to prevent recurring violations, notify Community Care Licensing when youth stay at RAIC more than 24 hours, and provide a roster of children who remained at the RAIC over 24 hours for calendar year 2012.

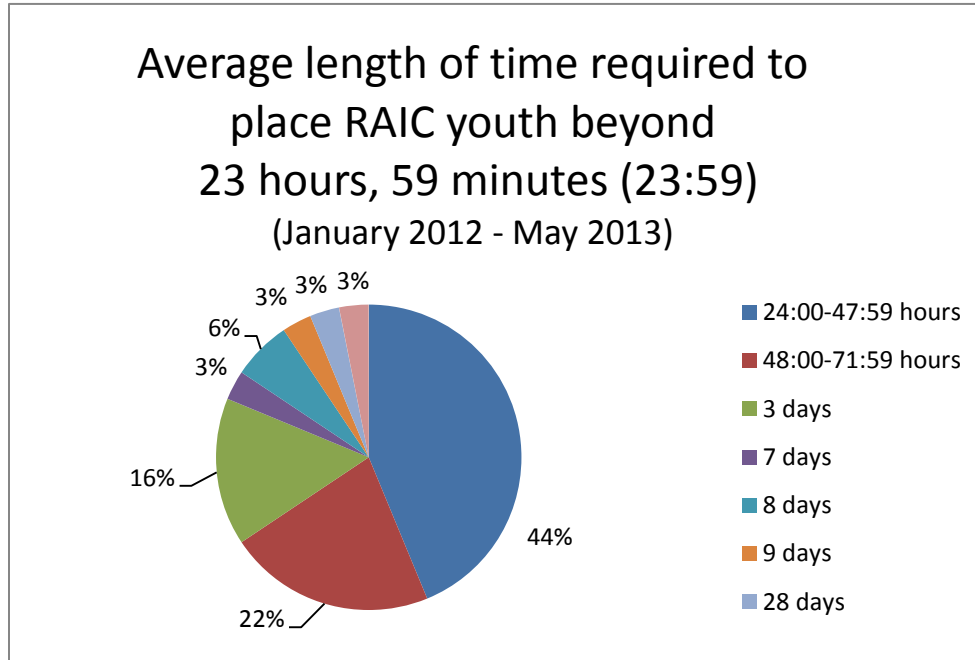
In the period following the citation (February through May 2013), there were seven incidents of youth exceeding a 24-hour stay at RAIC. During the same period in 2012, there were only four incidents of youth exceeding the 24 hour limit. However, a deeper look shows that the degree of non-compliance was far more severe in calendar year 2012 than in 2013 (through May). Youth who remained at RAIC in 2012 during this period stayed an average of 199 hours, or about 8 days. Between January and May 2013, youth at RAIC stayed an average of 39 hours, or less than two days. The County remains non-compliant with State law, but the average length of stay by youth has decreased significantly, indicating that the Department appears to be addressing the problem within the parameters of its existing resources.

As shown in Chart 4.2, more than 80 percent of the youth housed at the Center for more than 24 hours from January 1, 2012 through May 31, 2013 were there three days or fewer.

² Other counties operating receiving centers include: Alameda, Contra Costa, Monterey, Napa, Orange, San Diego, San Francisco and Los Angeles.

³ The exact count of operational "receiving centers" is complicated by the lack of a single accepted definition for the type of facility used to receive and assess youth. Some facilities are housed in hospital clinics while other youth are taken into custody and remain in office cubicles until a placement can be found. The nine facilities used for comparison purposes in this report operate a facility that includes a medical assessment and some kind of emergency residential component.

Chart 4.2



Source: 2012-2013 DFCS Logs of Children Remaining at RAIC over 24 Hours

Based on an evaluation of the 32 incidents⁴ of non-compliance described above, stays exceeding 24 hours occur primarily due to a lack of appropriate, available placements. Approximately 19 percent of delayed placements occurred because foster parents were unable to arrive prior to the 24-hour mark, making the violation more technical than substantive. Another 16 percent of youth exceeded the 24 hour mark because they required medical clearance or significant medical attention. The remaining 65 percent of all youth who exceeded a 24 hour stay were attributable to challenges finding appropriate placements. According to Department logs, 21 incidents of youth remaining at the RAIC past 24 hours were the direct result of an inability to find placements that could accommodate a child’s medical, behavior, language needs or sibling size. Beginning in July 2013, the Department has initiated community stakeholder meetings to provide feedback and input for the planning of the future, permanent Receiving Center facility. Attendees have included representatives from the Child Abuse Commission, Juvenile Justice Commission, existing RAIC staff and community-based organizations. Meetings were scheduled through September 2013, and regular progress reports are being provided to the Board’s Children’s, Seniors’ and Family Committee.

According to the San Francisco-based Youth Law Center,⁵ a national public interest law firm that works to protect children in the juvenile dependency and juvenile justice systems from abuse and

⁴ It should be noted that for the purpose of this discussion, an incident of non-compliance may include multiple youth, including sibling groups, remaining at RAIC past 24 hours. While there were 32 incidents of non-compliance, a total of 46 youth were housed at RAIC beyond 24 hours in the January 2012 – May 2013 period.

⁵ In 2000, the Youth Law Center represented a former foster youth who filed a taxpayer action alleging that the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) deliberately ignored that nine California counties, including the

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neglect, no lawsuits have yet been filed against a county for failing to place youth that are temporarily residing in a receiving center-type setting within 24 hours. However, the County could become the subject of State penalties or a lawsuit, which could eventually become a significant liability for the County. In response to persistent instances of non-compliance, the State has threatened Los Angeles County with a \$200 penalty per violation. In addition, the Youth Law Center has signaled it may initiate legal action to address long-standing problems with excessive placement delays. While the situation in the County of Santa Clara is not directly analogous to Los Angeles, it offers an important example for the County to consider as it discusses the RAIC's organizational structure and long-term plan.

Separating RAIC from Recruitment and Placement Experts Creates Unnecessary Delays

Under the Department's existing organizational structure, foster family recruitment and the placement function for abused and neglected youth is divided across three units reporting to two separate managers, as follows:

- At the Receiving Center, the Assessment Unit provides placement services for all non-dependent youth, as described above. This unit reports directly to the SSPM I overseeing RAIC.
- In the Family and Permanency Bureau (FPB), a team of three Social Worker IIIs comprise the Placement Unit and work under the Department's Placement Supervisor. This unit is responsible for finding placements for all dependent youth, meaning those who have already been removed from their caregivers and are in the custody of the child welfare system. These social workers must also find alternative placements for dependent foster youth when a seven-day notice of intent to terminate placement is given for a youth who is failing in his/her existing placement. The Placement Unit is staffed only on weekdays during business hours. As a result, on weekends and outside of business hours, the Assessment Unit is responsible for finding placement for all DFCS youth, regardless of whether they are dependent or non-dependent youth or if they are located outside of the Receiving Center.
- The Recruitment team for potential foster and adoptive families is also housed in the FPB, and reports directly to the SSPM II. This unit is comprised of two Social Worker IIIs who are responsible for recruiting and processing applications for potential foster and adoptive families for DFCS youth.

The work of these three units (Assessment, Placement and Recruitment) is integrally tied to each other. However, the Department's placement and recruitment expertise is housed in FPB,⁶ and

County of Santa Clara, operated children's shelters in violation of state licensing laws. In 2001, the court ordered CDSS to require all county-operated shelters meet community care licensing requirements.

⁶ In 2012, the County of Santa Clara, along with Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo and Yuba counties, was selected to participate as an early implementation county to design and implement a single standard approval process for resource families that can be initiated and completed within 90 days from the date of application. Resource families refer to individuals or couples the County determines to "have successfully met both the home approval standards

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these staff report to a separate manager. Their hours are mismatched with RAIC staffing, creating significant barriers to collaboration, and often creating unnecessary delays for placing youth. Until 2010, these units were combined under the same manager, but following the closure of the Children's Shelter, RAIC became a separate bureau with the Assessment Unit, while the Placement Unit moved under a separate SSPM II. The lack of a permanent RAIC manager since 2010 has compounded the problems of this separation. Separating the RAIC's Assessment Unit and the FPB's Placement and Recruitment Units impedes the ability of these units to collaborate and place youth in the most timely manner possible.

The present organizational structure requires managers to work across bureaus to ensure that these units are collaborating, which is inefficient and has inhibited the Department's ability to align and target its recruitment efforts to meet the needs of youth entering the child welfare system through the Receiving Center. Both the Placement and Assessment Unit use the same tools to place youth; however, without a single manager, there is a lack of strategic coordination to find available homes to care for youth with particularly challenging behaviors, and to recruit foster homes capable of accommodating special needs youth. The result has been makeshift collaboration across bureaus, and frequent over-use of the same foster homes, which in turn has resulted in foster parent fatigue and overall placement delays.

To ensure that sufficient placement resources are available to help place incoming youth at the RAIC, the Family and Permanency Bureau should be restructured to combine the recruitment, placement and RAIC functions. The restructured Receiving, Recruitment and Placement Bureau would be organized into four units, as follows:

- **Recruitment:** This unit, comprised of three Social Worker IIIs who report directly to the bureau's Social Services Manager, would be responsible for coordinating the Department's outreach to increase the number of available foster and adoptive homes..
- **Placement:** Three Social Worker IIIs would coordinate placement for all DFCS dependent youth, defined as youth in foster care and group homes. Two Social Worker Coordinator IIs provide permanency planning and wraparound services through the Resources and Intensive Service Committee (RISC). This unit would be under the Placement Social Work Supervisor.
- **Assessment:** Six Social Worker IIIs would process intakes to RAIC, place non-dependent youth, conduct family finding, and place dependent youth during non-business hours. This unit would be under the Assessment Social Work Supervisor.

and the permanency assessment criteria necessary for providing care for a related or unrelated child who is under the jurisdiction of the juvenile court, or otherwise in the care of a county child welfare agency or probation department." This voluntary pilot program is intended to streamline approval for foster parents, relative and non-relative extended family member caregivers, prospective guardians, and adoptive parents. Depending on the success of this pilot, the County may see an uptick in the number of available licensed homes to receive RAIC youth, which could help in part to address the placement issues discussed in this finding by increasing the total number of available homes.

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- **Joint Decision-Making:** This unit, now part of the Family Resource Center Bureau, uses collaborative meetings to discuss and identify safe and appropriate placements for youth, and is staffed by a Social Work Supervisor overseeing six Social Work Coordinators IIs.
- **Adoption Finalization Unit:** Six Social Worker IIIs under a Social Work Supervisor provide logistical and administrative support to coordinate across the State and County to finalize an adoption, assist with Safely Surrendered Babies, provide adoption counseling to birth parents, and assist with other adoption related programs.
- **Resource Homes Unit:** Seven Social Worker IIIs under one Social Work Supervisor provide foster home licensing services and compliance monitoring. The unit also conducts adoption home studies.
- **Social Worker Is:** This unit would be comprised of a team of 11 former Children’s Counselors. As discussed in the next section, these social workers would provide support services (transportation, supervised visits, etc.) and child care services on an as-needed basis when the Center has children on-site.

Detailed organizational charts showing the new structure are provided as Attachment 4.1 at the end of this section. The newly structured bureau would be managed by a SSPM III (discussed in depth in Section 5 on Organizational Structure) and a SSPM I. The SSPM I would be transferred from the Emergency Response Division of the Front-End Bureau to the newly formed Receiving, Recruitment, and Placement Bureau. According to the SSPM I job description, staff at this level typically oversee a small to medium discrete group of interrelated services. RAIC functions directly meet this description, especially in comparison to emergency response services, which encompass multiple, complex services that have a major impact on County operations.

The remaining staff of the Family and Permanency Bureau, which are devoted to post-adoptive related functions, would be combined with the staff of the existing Family Resource Centers Bureau, to create a new Prevention and Permanency Bureau, as further discussed in Section 5. Such reorganization of the Family and Permanency Bureau into two separate bureaus will enable the Department to better align staff resources to meet DFCS client needs in a timely and effective manner.

Underutilization of Children’s Counselors

The Receiving, Assessment and Intake Center staffing includes 17 Children’s Counselors who provide child care to youth during their stay at the Center. Because there is no way to anticipate when children may be dropped off at the Center, under the existing staffing plan, a minimum of two counselors staff the Center at all times, even when no children are present. When no youth are physically present at RAIC, Children’s Counselors primary responsibilities are to ensure that the RAIC is prepared to receive children by sanitizing and organizing the facility and updating appropriate logs. When these tasks are complete, no other known duties were reported to the audit team. The following section highlights staffing changes and schedule changes that would allow the Department to better utilize the 17 Children’s Counselor positions when youth are not present or when the Receiving Center population is low.

Section 4. Receiving, Assessment and Intake Center

Dynamic Staffing Models for Emergency Child Care Services

More than half of the counties surveyed by the Management Audit Division report using a dynamic staffing mechanism to provide child care to youth entering the Receiving Center.

- In Sacramento County, nine Child Development Specialists provide child care to youth coming through the County’s Centralized Placement Support Unit (CPSU), located at the Sacramento Children’s Receiving Home. This unit provides equivalent assessment and placement services as the RAIC Bureau and Placement Unit in the County of Santa Clara. The Child Development Specialists receive an on-call pay differential, paid on every five-minute interval within an hour worked outside their regular shift. If child care is needed between midnight and 8 a.m., on-call Specialists commit to arriving at the Receiving Home as soon as possible once notified of an incoming child. At other times, two to three Specialists staff the Receiving Home, whether or not children are present, and can be supplemented by up to four other on-call Specialist staff when there are a large number of children on-site. The ability to staff the facility only as-needed from midnight to 8 a.m. represents a dynamic staffing approach.
- In the Counties of Contra Costa and Monterey, the child care, intake and operational aspects of their receiving centers are operated by the same non-profit group, which also uses flexible staffing to provide care to admitted youth. Each county provides medical and behavioral assessments through its public health department. In both counties, the non-profit operates on a fixed-price contract, and the non-profit staffs its centers in such a way that a child care worker can be available within 30 minutes of receiving notice that a child will be admitted and the receiving center is only open when needed.
- For the past two decades, the City and County of San Francisco has stationed one unit of 10 social workers at San Francisco General Hospital as part of its 23-hour Child Protection Center. Two social workers are dedicated to identifying appropriate placements for admitted youth, and the remaining eight social workers are responsible for processing and caring for intakes. During all shifts, including overnight, social workers are responsible for multiple functions while youth are present, including child care. Youth receive medical screening and clearance at the hospital while awaiting placement. During non-business hours, there is only one overnight staff person. The County employs additional “as-needed” childcare staff who cover the regular staff’s scheduled vacation and sick times and are also on-call and able to arrive at the Center immediately if there are more children than the staff on duty can safely care for during the day and/or overnight.
- Since 2002, the County of Alameda has contracted its assessment center to a community-based, private non-profit clinic that specializes in providing psychological services to vulnerable children and youth. The clinic is a non-residential, child-friendly facility that operates 23 hours per day, which is staffed and managed by the non-profit. The center’s daily operations, including child care, medical and mental health screenings, are services provided by the clinic. During weekday business hours and on-call 7 a.m. – 3 p.m. on weekend and holidays, County of Alameda placement workers are available on-site at the

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assessment center to place youth in appropriate foster or other out-of-home care within 24 hours.

These models enable counties to provide adequate child care staff to meet demand, as needed. Select portions of each model may be applicable to the County of Santa Clara, as discussed below.

Optimizing Use of Receiving Center Staff

Given the existing RAIC staffing assignments, Children's Counselors duties are restricted to child care only. When youth are not present, these staff are underutilized.

As discussed in the Organizational Structure Finding in Section 5, the County of Santa Clara employs four units of social work support staff classified as Social Worker Is. These staff provide services such as supervising visits between parents and children, transporting children and families, performing drug tests and/or paternity tests, and other support work as requested by a case-carrying social worker. The demand for support staff has increased dramatically since budget cuts reduced the ratio of support staff to case-carrying social workers from an average of one support staff member for every 5.0 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) case-carrying social workers during 2008 to 2011, to a ratio of 1:8.7 FTE in 2012. Without adequate levels of support staff at the Social Worker I classification, case-carrying Social Worker IIIs must perform this support work, often on overtime. In some cases, the impact of reduced support staff to fulfill requests has resulted in Court-mandated tasks, such as supervised parent-child visits, not being completed.

The minimum qualifications for a Social Worker I position are nearly equivalent to the RAIC Children's Counselors, with the following exceptions:

- Counselors are considered a journey level position, whereas a Social Worker I position is an entry trainee level classification.
- Counselors do not require a college degree, but must have some college coursework and can substitute work experience in lieu of college credit. Social Worker Is require graduation from an accredited college or university, however, "[qualifying experience] may be substituted for a maximum of two years of the required education on a year-for-year basis when lower division general education requirements with an emphasis in the human services curriculum are met."

In spite of these differences, we believe that the majority of existing Children's Counselors could qualify for a promotion to a Social Worker I position when work experience is considered in lieu of a formal degree. In fact, according to the Department, following the 2009 Children's Shelter closure, a similar process was employed to convert Children's Counselors to Social Worker Is, establishing a precedent for the following recommendations:

To better utilize the Department's staff resources at the Receiving Center, we recommend the following changes be implemented during the Fiscal Year 2014-15 budget process.

- Effective July 1, 2014, the Department should delete 15 Children's Counselor and two Senior Children's Counselor positions, and add 11 Social Worker I positions.

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- Based on an analysis of the RAIC's estimated average daily census during 2012 and 2013 and the minimum staffing standards set by the California Department of Social Services, 11 newly converted Social Worker I codes should be assigned to RAIC to provide 24/7 coverage for children admitted to the Center. Because there is no way to predict the number of incoming children, a minimum of two Social Worker Is per shift would be needed to ensure the Center is in compliance with the required staffing ratios set by the California Community Care Licensing Division.⁷ The current Social Work Supervisor overseeing the Children's Counselors should supervise this newly created unit of 11 Social Worker Is.
- When these 11 positions are filled, the new Social Worker Is could take on additional duties not only at the RAIC, but in assisting case-carrying social workers in other bureaus, when the Receiving Center population is low. Based on consultation with the Employee Services Agency (ESA), implementing this recommendation would provide a promotional opportunity for 11 of the 17 existing Counselor staff. Effective July 1, 2014, the remaining six positions would be deleted. ESA concurs that these recommendations can be accomplished, if approved by the Board of Supervisors.

Implementing these recommendations would result in the deletion of 17 Children's Counselor positions (including two Senior Counselors) and the addition of 11 Social Worker I positions. The combined net benefit of the above actions is projected to be \$547,042 in ongoing salary and benefit savings, of which \$130,982 is estimated to be General Fund savings.⁸ These recommendations would enable the Department to flexibly staff its Receiving Center in accordance with its population demands while realizing long-term salary and benefit savings from the deletion of underutilized codes. By staffing the Receiving Center with Social Worker Is, the Department gains a team of 11 staff who can assist with higher level social work desk tasks, such as interviewing clients, client referrals to community resources, preparation of case records, etc. when the RAIC population is low or vacant. The addition of this higher staffing classification may also allow the Department to reduce its overtime costs from Social Worker IIIs in the Front-end and Continuing bureaus who currently must balance support work with court-mandated reports and other higher level case requirements.

Alternatively, the Department could consider following the examples of the Counties of Alameda, Contra Costa and Monterey, where operation of county receiving centers is a contract

⁷ These recommended staffing ratios are based on regulations set by the Community Care Licensing (CCL) Division of the California Department of Social Services for facilities that provide care to youth for more than 24 hours. The Receiving Center is not a CCL licensed facility and therefore is not subject to these staffing standards. In the event that youth remain at the Center more than 24 hours, the Department would be found in violation of State law by operating an unlicensed child care facility. To ensure adequate staffing attention to incoming traumatized youth, our recommended staffing ratio surpasses the State minimum staff to children ratio despite the fact that the Department's Receiving Center is not a licensed CCL facility.

⁸ The estimated General Fund share of costs is a Department-wide average based on the actual FY 2012-13 costs.

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function performed by non-profit service providers. This would require the Department to issue a Request for Proposal for such services and conduct a meet-and-confer process with relevant unions. Based on preliminary estimates generated by the service provider for the Counties of Contra Costa and Monterey, to provide similar services in the County of Santa Clara, including staff, lease and overhead costs, could cost approximately \$402,911 (Attachment 4.2). These contract costs would be offset by salary and benefits savings and result in additional net savings to the County.

CONCLUSION

Placement and Recruitment services are critical to the timely placement of youth admitted to the Receiving Center. The existing organizational structure of the Family and Permanency Bureau and separate Receiving, Assessment and Intake Center exacerbates placement delays and is a contributing factor to the County's lack of compliance with the Health and Safety Code to place incoming youth to RAIC within 24 hours. By restructuring the Department's bureaus to align the Receiving Center, recruitment and placement functions, existing Department staff can begin to more efficiently share resources and information while informing recruitment practices of the demographic, behavioral and medical placement needs observed by youth first entering RAIC and ultimately the child welfare system. By reorganizing staff within different bureaus, deleting 17 existing Children's Counselor positions, and adding 11 Social Worker I positions, the Department can generate net savings of \$547,042, provide immediate support to case carrying social workers, and reduce placement delays.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Department of Family and Children's Services should:

- 4.1 Consolidate the placement and recruitment functions from the Family and Permanency Bureau (FPB) with RAIC into a new bureau, Receiving, Recruitment and Placement, to ensure sufficient placement resources are available to help place children taken away from parents in safe and suitable homes. (Priority 1)
- 4.2 Standardize training and the reporting mechanism used to record entry and exit data for youth admitted to the RAIC, which specifically highlights youth remaining at the Center over 24 hours, to ensure the Department has accurate statistical information on RAIC operations and can conduct substantive analysis of RAIC operations. (Priority 3)
- 4.3 During the FY 2014-15 budget process, delete 17 Counselor positions (including two Senior Counselor positions) and add 11 Social Worker I positions to staff the RAIC, effective July 1, 2014, to realize net savings of \$547,042, of which \$130,982 is estimated General Fund savings. (Priority 1)

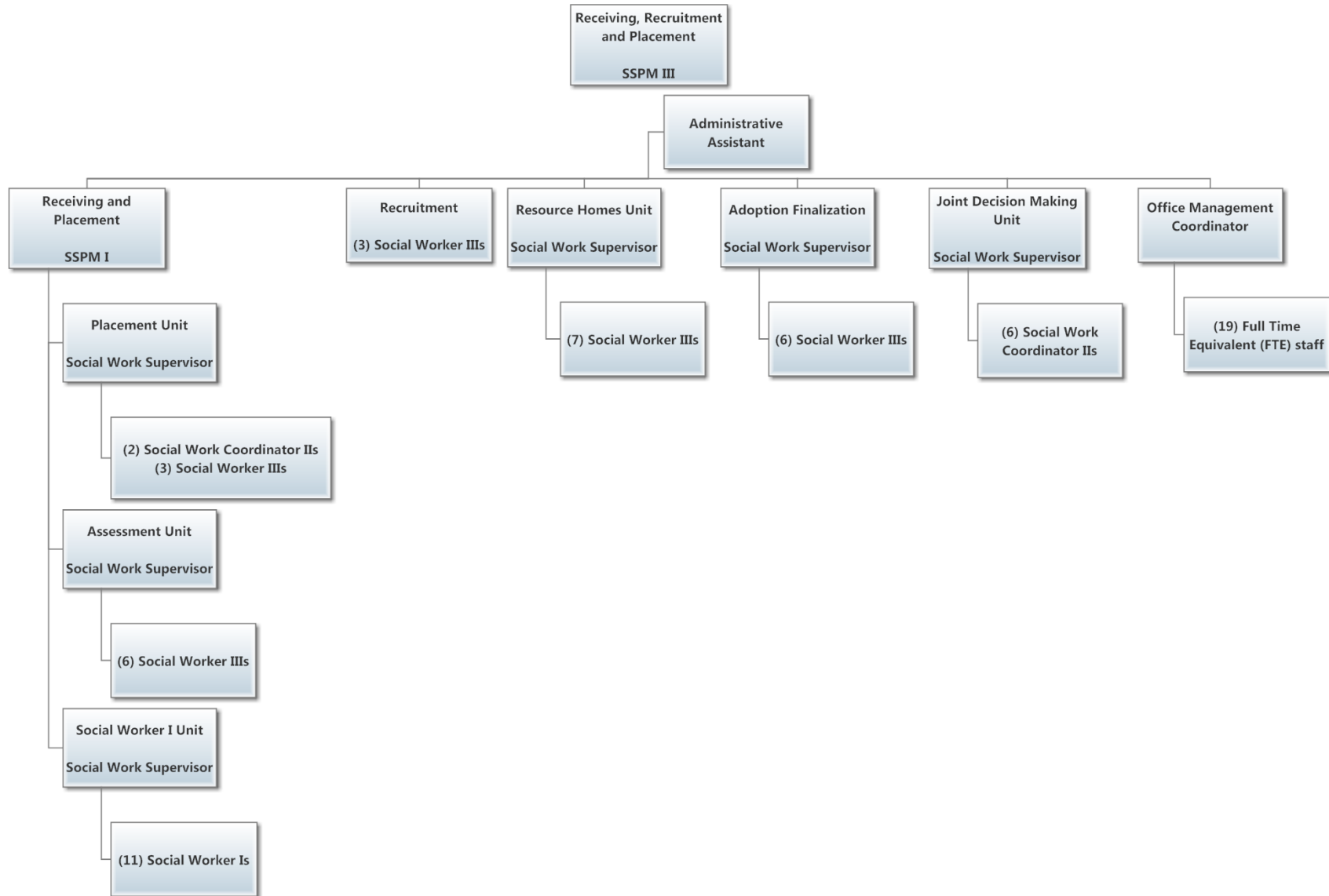
OR

- 4.4 Issue a Request for Proposals to identify an organization to operate the child care, intake, and receiving functions of the Receiving Center on a contract basis, and conduct a meet-and-confer process with relevant union representatives. (Priority 1)

SAVINGS, BENEFITS AND COSTS

Implementation of Recommendation 4.1 would ensure that staffing and resources are effectively aligned to increase efficiency of placement operations, particularly placing youth removed from their home into an alternate placement within 24 hours of removal. By doing so, the County would maintain compliance with the Health and Safety Code and mitigate any risk exposure to potential lawsuits. Implementation of Recommendation 4.3 would result in a net General Fund savings of \$130,982, while allowing more effective utilization of staff when the Receiving Center has few or no clients. (The estimated General Fund share of costs is a Department-wide average based on the total FY 2012-13 actual costs). Finally, Recommendation 4.4, the issuance of a Request for Proposal to contract out receiving center functions could cost the County an estimated \$402,911, but would be offset by savings as a result of reductions in County staff.

Attachment 4.1: Proposed Organizational Structure for 73 FTE in Receiving, Recruitment and Placement Bureau



RECEIVING CENTER SAMPLE BUDGET

Administration

District Director	\$	12,000.00	.2 FTE
Social Worker	\$	17,500.00	.5 FTE
Center Supervisor	\$	42,000.00	1.0 FTE
Lead Child Care Worker	\$	37,440.00	18/hr
Child Care Worker	\$	62,400.00	15/hr, 15/hr for weekend
On Call Child Care	\$	27,650.00	15/hr, 16/hr for weekend
Total Salaries	\$	198,990.00	
Benefits 22%	\$	43,777.80	
Total Personnel	\$	242,767.80	

Operational

Maintenance	\$	3,910.00	
Advertising	\$	625.00	
Finger Printing	\$	1,083.00	
Travel/Mileage	\$	500.00	
Postage	\$	125.00	
Communication	\$	7,000.00	
Building Lease	\$	50,000.00	includes initial build out
Start up costs including furniture	\$	25,000.00	
Building Maintenance	\$	667.00	
Building Equipment/Supplies	\$	600.00	
Expendable Equipment	\$	1,500.00	
Utilities	\$	6,000.00	
Clothing	\$	6,000.00	
Food	\$	4,000.00	
P&I	\$	310.00	
Program Supplies	\$	4,900.00	
Total Operating	\$	112,220.00	
Subtotal	\$	354,987.80	
Admin 13.5%	\$	47,923.35	
Total	\$	402,911.15	

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Section 5. Organizational Structure

Background

- In FY 2012-13, the Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS) employed 548 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) staff organized in nine bureaus, plus an Administration Office. Each of the nine bureaus is managed by a Social Services Program Manager (SSPM) I, II or III. Within the nine bureaus, there are six clerical support units and four special purpose units responsible for conducting drug tests, paternity tests, supervised parent-child visits, and facilitating child and family transportation.

Problem

- Organizational span-of-control of the nine bureau managers varies excessively from as few as three direct reports to as many as 12, with total bureau staffing ranging from 21 to 158 authorized positions. Some staff units performing interrelated functions are placed in different bureaus under separate managers. Other units with demanding functions and competing timelines are placed under one manager whose span is too broad. Lastly, social worker support staff has been reduced by almost half in the past two years, while the number of case-carrying social workers has not.

Adverse Effect

- These inefficiencies inhibit DFCS management from effectively utilizing staff and ensuring timely service delivery to clients. For instance, the Receiving Center has retained children removed from their home beyond 24 hours, a violation of the Health and Safety Code, in part because placement staffing is inefficiently divided between two separate bureaus and managers. The existing organizational structure also limits the ability of case carrying social workers to efficiently and effectively meet caseload demands, such as ensuring supervised parent-child visits occur, and meeting Court report deadlines for placing children in protective custody.

Recommendations, Savings and Benefits

- By placing closely-related functions in the same bureaus, providing more balanced spans-of-control, and realigning support staff to work where they are most needed, DFCS would have more effective management oversight, streamline communication among social workers in related functions, and improve responsiveness to reports of child abuse and neglect. Implementation of these recommendations is estimated to result in net staffing savings of \$661,411, of which \$159,104 is General Fund savings.

Department Organizational and Management Structure

The Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS) has a total of 548 Full-Time-Equivalent (FTE) staff in 10 organizational subdivisions, as shown in the following table.

Table 5.1

Department of Family and Children Services
Staffing as of June 2013

<u>Bureau</u>	<u>Staff</u>
Administration	4
Administrative Support Bureau	38
Child Abuse and Neglect (CAN) Reporting Center	21
Family & Permanency Bureau*	41
Family Resource Centers (San Jose)	39
Front-End (Emergency Response and Court Intervention)**	158
Receiving, Assessment, & Intake Center (RAIC)	34
Service Bureau B	90
Service Bureau C	81
South County	<u>42</u>
Department Total	548

Source: DFCS June 2013 Organizational Chart

*The audit's staffing analysis is based on Departmental organizational charts as of June 5, 2013, which includes a total of 41 FTE in the Family and Permanency Bureau. Subsequent information provided by the Department indicates 42 FTE in this bureau, which is not depicted in Table 5.1.

**This total count includes a Social Worker II that is currently on a Leave of Absence, which is considered a 0.0 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) in the DFCS organizational chart. However, for our analysis, we assume that a full FTE is needed to meet the demands of current workload, and therefore, included this position in our staff counts.

Attachment 5.1 describes each bureau and its functions in detail. The remainder of this section describes the functions of specific bureaus as necessary to present our analysis of potential improvements to be realized through organizational changes. As a result, considerable changes to the structure are recommended. The existing structure and our recommended changes are summarized in Attachment 5.2.

Three levels of Social Service Program Managers (SSPM I through III) manage these programs. The levels are as follows:

- SSPM I - Typically reports to a higher level manager at the most senior level (i.e. SSPM III) and are involved with one service or a small to medium number of directly interrelated services.
- SSPM II – Under the direction of executive management, SSPM IIs typically have responsibility for a moderate to large size program which is of high complexity and responsibility.
- SSPM III – Also under the direction of executive management, SSPM IIIs have significantly more discretion and independence in decision-making while managing programs or offices that are very large in size.

Span of Control and Contracts Workload

The span of control among the highest-level SSPM bureau managers varies significantly, resulting in various levels of workload and management oversight. Further, some SSPMs have contract monitoring and oversight responsibility, and the total number and value of contracts varies significantly by bureau, which also impacts workload of the managers. These differences are illustrated by the following table, and are discussed in depth below.

Table 5.2

Staffing and Contract Responsibility for Highest-Level of Social Service Program Managers (SSPM), By Bureau as of June 2013

<u>Bureau</u>	<u>Highest - Level Manager</u>	<u>Total Staff</u>	<u>Contracts Amount (in millions) ²</u>
Administrative Support Bureau	SSPM III	38	\$6.0
Front-End (ER and DI)	SSPM III	158	\$2.7
Service Bureau B	SSPM III	90	\$0.0
Service Bureau C	SSPM III	81	\$0.0
South County	SSPM III	42	\$0.0
Family & Permanency Bureau	SSPM II	41	\$12.3
Family Resource Centers	SSPM II	39	\$1.7
CAN Reporting Center	SSPM I	21	\$0.6
Receiving, Assessment, & Intake Center	SSPM I	<u>34</u>	<u>\$0.0</u>
Total		544¹	\$23.3

Source: DFCS June 2013 Organizational Chart and contract data provided by DFCS

¹ This total differs from Table 5.1 because it excludes four members of the Administration Bureau.

² The approximate contract value is based on contract monitoring responsibilities as of March 2013.

As described below, the SSPM Is in the Front-End Bureau have a significantly higher workload than their peers in the Continuing Service Bureaus. All of the Social Work Supervisors report to the SSPM I on a day-to-day basis for the ER and DI Divisions. However, the SSPM III has final say on disciplinary actions and conducts one-on-one supervision with Supervisors. The SSPM Is in the Front-End Bureau also have oversight over clerical and Social Worker I units. Further, the SSPM I for ER is responsible for the After Hours Program discussed in Sections 1 and 2 of this report, as well as the Differential Response Path II Program, or referrals for voluntary services for families who were referred to the CAN Reporting Center, but after initial assessment, had their cases closed. Consequently, the ER and DI SSPM Is are responsible for nine and seven units, respectively, and are overseeing moderate to large size programs. However, the SSPM Is in the Continuing bureaus have a much lower span of control, managing only one or two units, which are the Social Work Supervisor responsible for the Social Worker I unit for either Bureau B or Bureau C and the clerical staff that support both bureaus. In addition, the Continuing

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SSPM Is are not responsible for a specific program, as is required in the classification specifications for SSPM Is described above.

The Management Audit Division recommends that DFCS return to an earlier structure in which ER and the CAN Reporting Center, were combined due to their interrelated workload of screening referrals and responding to them in the field, while separating DI as an independent bureau. Coordinating these functions is crucial, because failure by CAN Reporting Center staff to adequately determine which telephone complaints require further investigation, and how quickly, directly impacts the Emergency Response social workers' ability to meet State regulations and make an "immediate" in-person response in emergency situations, as discussed in Section 2 of this report. Our recommendation would require an additional SSPM III for DI, which could be the SSPM III currently assigned to the South County Bureau, if DFCS chooses to centralize the reporting structure for South County staff (discussed below).

The Department management reported that at one point, ER and the CAN Reporting Center staff were combined. In their experience with that arrangement, they reported that CAN Reporting Center staff felt pressured not to assign reports of abuse and neglect to ER staff as referrals because the ER caseloads were getting too high. However, it is the responsibility of the Department to report to the Board of Supervisors and request more ER staff as necessary to respond to the volume of legitimate reports of abuse and neglect to the call center. To prevent a similar situation from occurring if the services are again combined, DFCS should provide monthly special reports to the County Executive and Board of Supervisors that show:

- a) Calls answered, received and abandoned at the CAN Reporting Center, including calls from law enforcement, most of which are not currently tracked;
- b) Number of ER referrals;
- c) Removal of children and intakes at the Receiving, Assessment and Intake Center;
- d) Petitions filed in the Superior Court; and,
- e) Instances in which the Court agreed to keep children in protective custody.

The first two statistics, with the exception of calls from law enforcement, are currently compiled and reported monthly. However, the Department does not compile or report the remaining information, which would be helpful for Department managers, County Executive, and the Board of Supervisors to determine any patterns and gaps throughout the continuum of front-end child welfare services.

The changes in front-end services would also permit elimination of a vacant Administrative Assistant position in Dependency Investigations, saving \$91,429 annually, since the existing South County SSPM III in South County already has an Administrative Assistant position. Further, the number of SSPM Is in DFCS should be reduced and their workload redefined as follows:

- 1) Retain the existing SSPM I overseeing the CAN Reporting Center, because the call center is a small to medium-size program with 21 positions that serves a critical function highlighted in the Department's 2013 SIP;

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- 2) Delete the vacant SSPM I code from the DI Division, saving \$146,014 annually, because the addition of a SSPM III over DI makes the position superfluous;
- 3) Shift the SSPM I code from the ER Division to the Receiving, Recruitment and Placement Bureau, because it is a critical small- to medium-size program with 25 positions, as proposed in Section 4; and,
- 4) Delete two SSPM Is in the Continuing Service Bureaus when these positions become vacant, saving \$292,028 annually, because they do not oversee any specific programs and their existing work can be absorbed by the SSPM IIIs. As of August 31, 2013, there are three vacant SSPM I positions in the Social Services Administration.

Savings from these proposed changes totals \$529,471 in salaries and benefits annually, of which \$126,571 is estimated to be General Fund savings not reimbursed by State or federal sources.

South County Bureau

Caseloads of the existing South County ER and Continuing units differ from their counterparts in San Jose. For instance, in 2012, the average number of referrals per FTE in the San Jose day shift ER units was 186 referrals. However, the ER unit in South County had a 2012 average of 169 referrals per FTE, about nine percent fewer. In contrast, South County Continuing social workers, who oversee cases following completion of disposition by the Court, have higher caseloads, both in terms of the numbers and complexity, as reflected in the case weights. These differences are shown in the following table.

Table 5.3

2012 Caseloads for DFCS Continuing Social Workers

<u>Bureau</u>	Average Cases per Month per Productive FTE		Average Case Weight (points) per Month per Productive FTE*	
	English Only	Bilingual	English Only	Bilingual
Bureau B	17.5	17.8	80.5	79.4
Bureau C	14.8	17.8	66.3	81.2
South County	17.9	24.4	82.9	106.0
Average	16.7	20.0	76.6	88.8
Contract Standards	Max 30	Max 30	100.0	80.0

Sources: Sample of 12 months of caseload statistics reports and data on new cases provided by DFCS

*Different weights are assigned to cases depending on if they are court mandated, voluntary, part of a special court such as Drug Court, and whether the child is placed in or out of the home.

As shown on the right side of the table, South County Bilingual Social Workers average well above contractual case weight point standards, while Service Bureau C English speaking Social Workers have caseloads well below the standard, and below that of the other bureaus. Therefore, centralizing caseload assignment for continuing cases would provide flexibility in assigning cases so that caseloads are more evenly distributed. In addition, having South County Social Workers stay in Gilroy to maintain proximity to a majority of their clients, while reporting to

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supervisors and managers in San Jose, could improve consistency in the management of continuing cases among staff in various locations. Supervisors based in San Jose could coordinate days or office hours assigned per week in which they physically visit the Gilroy office and perform supervision.

Based on this analysis, we recommend that DFCS centralize the reporting of its South County staff with their San Jose counterparts. This would require assignment of an SSPM III position, which we have recommended oversee Dependency Investigations, as previously discussed. Because this proposal does not delete or add positions, it generates no staff costs or savings. However, this new reporting structure would improve management of DFCS resources and ultimately service delivery.

Administrative Services Bureau

The Social Service Program Manager III in the Administrative Service Bureau (ASB) oversees the fewest number of staff when compared to the other SSPM IIIs, but the Bureau's work impacts most other bureaus by providing support services to case carrying social workers. In addition, the Bureau's SSPM III is ultimately responsible for \$6 million in contracts, the second largest amount assigned to a bureau, as shown in Table 5.2 above. This bureau is also a catch-all for services and programs that do not directly align with other Department functions. As a result, the ASB includes a specialized unit of case carrying social workers, managed by the SSPM III, who are isolated from social workers with similar duties in other bureaus. The following recommendations would realign resources so that the SSPM III and the entire bureau can focus on essential administrative support work.

Non-Minor Dependent Unit

Historically, federal payments for foster children continued only until age 18. Federal rules changed in 2008 permitting states to extend foster care to eligible youth through age 21. California agreed to do so in 2010 with the passage of AB 12, and the first phase became effective January 1, 2012. In response, DFCS created a special unit of four Social Worker IIIs in the ASB to provide case management to these youth, known as Non-Minor Dependents (NMDs). Participation in the program by clients leaving foster care at age 18 is voluntary, and they can freely move in and out of the program until they turn 21.

NMD staffing is insufficient to handle the current caseload, which is also projected to grow dramatically as youth continue to leave foster care at age 18, and choose to participate in the "additional services." As of April 2013, there were 159 NMD cases at DFCS,¹ with 94 of them, or 60 percent, assigned to the four ASB social workers. The remaining cases were mostly assigned to Continuing Bureaus B and C. As of December 21, 2012, there were 380 youth aged 15 to 17 assigned to DFCS social workers. Consequently, over the next three years, an additional 228 cases could be assigned to the NMD social workers, while only 94 terminate.

¹ In April 2013, there were 126 non-minor dependent youth with delinquency cases in the Probation Department and dependency cases in DFCS, who would be eligible for NMD services if their delinquency cases were settled.

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To provide sufficient staff adequately trained and available to handle NMD cases, the existing unit of four Social Worker IIIs and a Social Work Supervisor should be transferred from ASB to Continuing Service Bureau C,² which currently has fewer staff members than Continuing Service Bureau B. The specialized NMD staff can train and mentor other social workers. This restructuring would also allow case carrying social workers to serve this population under supervision by managers whose sole job is service delivery to foster youth. These managers could also implement practice standards to maintain consistency in how social workers address NMD needs.

Family and Permanency Bureau (FPB), RAIC, and Resource Centers

The Family & Permanency Bureau's core function is placing dependent youth in living situations safer than their homes. This entails recruiting and licensing foster homes, placing youth in appropriate home-settings, and providing adoption finalization and post-adoption services to adoptive families and children. As discussed extensively in Section 4, the recruitment and placement functions of this bureau are integrally tied to the Department's Receiving, Assessment and Intake Center (RAIC), which evaluates and provides emergency placement services to youth placed into protective custody. To more effectively align Department resources and increase the efficiency of placement operations, in Section 4, we recommend combining the Family and Permanency Bureau's Placement and Recruitment units with the Receiving, Assessment and Intake Center Bureau.

The remaining functions under the existing Family and Permanency Bureau (FPB) should be combined with the existing Family Resource Center bureau to create a Prevention and Permanency bureau, with no staffing adjustments. Under the management of the SSPM II who currently oversees the Family Resource Centers, this newly formed bureau will be able to better serve families receiving voluntary services in the Family Resource Centers, and families who have successfully adopted DFCS youth. Exclusive of clerical staff and the manager, the new Prevention and Permanency Bureau would include 30 Full Time Equivalents (FTE) as follows:

- **Nuestra Casa, Asian-Pacific Islander and Ujirani Family Resource Centers** (13 FTE) – Eleven Social Worker IIIs under two Social Work Supervisors provide culturally sensitive voluntary services and parenting classes to targeted community groups.
- **Family Unification** (2) – One Social Work Coordinator II and one currently vacant Social Worker III position assist families whose cases have already been terminated. These families are in eminent danger of being placed out of their homes, and the Family Unification Program provides housing vouchers and voluntary case management.
- **Specialized Services** (2) – Includes one Social Work Coordinator II and one Eligibility Worker III tasked with general responsibility for monitoring the Department's parent education, parenting without violence, substance abuse, parent child interactive therapeutic training, child supervision, batterer's intervention program contracts and parent orientation.

² DFCS staff report that in June 2013, a vacant Social Worker III code was transferred to the NMD unit in ASB and would be assigned 20 NMD cases that are currently assigned to Continuing Service Bureau social workers. We recommend that this code and the NMD cases be transferred back to the Continuing Service Bureau to maintain case carrying social work within the Continuing Service Bureaus and administrative function in the ASB.

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- **Post-Adoptive Services (5)** – Four Social Worker IIIs working under one Social Work Supervisor process and monitor Adoption Assistance Cases and assist with inquiries that are received after an adoption has been finalized.
- **Gilroy Family Resource Center & South County Social Worker Is (7)** – Includes one Social Work Supervisor who oversees the Gilroy Family Resource Center and South County Social Worker I unit. This unit is comprised of a team of one Employment Counselor II, one Social Worker II, and four Social Worker Is who provide support services to case-carrying social workers based in South County for court-mandated visitation, paternity and drug testing, etc.
- **Social Work Coordinator II (1)** – This position is currently in transition but has been supporting cases that are part of the Dependency Wellness Court, where parents with substance abuse issues must go to court more frequently as part of their case plans.

Realigning preventive services and post-adoptive services will reduce the existing Department tendency of allowing emergency placement issues to take precedent over voluntary preventive services and “back-end” adoptive services. “Back-end” adoptive services allow cases of abuse and neglect to be successfully concluded.

Restructuring the Family and Permanency Bureau into two separate bureaus is also critical to ensure better contract monitoring and management. Compared to the Department’s nine other bureaus, FPB has both the highest dollar value and largest number of contracts. Because contract monitoring responsibilities are assigned to the bureau whose function most closely aligns with contract services, the contracts workload for the FPB SSPM II and Placement Supervisor is disproportionately high compared to other DFCS managers and supervisors. There are 40 agreements worth approximately \$12.3 million in the Family and Permanency Bureau alone, including 28 agreements for approximately \$10.8 million of wraparound and intensive foster care services, which provide intensive, individualized services to youth with serious emotional or behavioral disturbances. These wraparound contracts require extensive monitoring and management. A recent study by the Management Audit Division identified numerous problems with contract, invoice and performance review, as discussed more in Section 6.

Given the scope and value of placement contracts, a more senior manager is needed to oversee the recommended Receiving, Recruitment and Placement Bureau.³ The existing SSPM II classification overseeing the FPB should be promoted to a SSPM III classification at an annual cost of \$14,074. This restructuring would also permit the elimination of a vacant Social Services Program Manager I position in the Receiving Center Bureau, saving \$146,014 annually. Under the proposed audit recommendations, oversight of the Receiving Center would become the responsibility of the newly created SSPM III classification, supported by a SSPM I in the new Receiving, Recruitment and Placement Bureau, which is described in Section 4. The net effect of these changes would be an annual salary and benefit savings of \$131,940 annually, of which \$32,533 is estimated to be General Fund savings, not reimbursed from State or federal sources.

³ Under the existing organizational structure, the FPB’s SSPM II oversees \$12.3 million of contract expenditures. This represents more than double the contract expenditures overseen by the Administrative Support Bureau’s SSPM III, a more senior management classification.

Office Professional Staff

In August 2013, unions approved a final reorganization plan for office professionals that has been in discussion for over five years. The reorganization plan began under the previous DFCS Director and the purpose was to equalize staff and units for each of the Office Management Coordinators overseeing office professional staff. However, due to the recommended changes to bureaus and staffing discussed throughout this report, we propose an alternative reorganization of office professional staff to better align resources with the functions of the proposed DFCS organizational structure.

Attachment 5.3 compares the recently approved office professional clerical organization with the auditors' proposed reporting structure for six Office Management Coordinators. Key differences between the two include centralizing the reporting of office professional staff in South County, and shifting staff into the newly created Recruitment, Receiving and Placement, and Permanency and Prevention Bureaus.

Our proposed changes do not add or delete any positions, and thus are cost neutral, as is DFCS' plan. Our alternative would serve only to properly align clerical staff resources with the reorganization of professional staff we have recommended thus far in this section.

Social Worker Support Staff

Social work support staff classifications, such as Social Worker I, Public Service Aides, and Transportation Officers⁴ provide services such as supervising visits between parents and children, transporting children and their families, performing drug tests and/or paternity tests, and any other support work requested by a case carrying social worker. There are currently four Social Worker I units at DFCS, each overseen by a Social Work Supervisor, with six to 11 Social Worker Is per unit. Support staff work is not reimbursable by State or federal funding.

Department budget cuts have reduced the number of social work support staff significantly in the past two years, while the number of case carrying social workers has not been correspondingly reduced, as shown in Table 5.4 on the following page.

⁴ 2011 was the last year in which a Public Service Aide or Transportation Officer existed at DFCS. Only the Social Worker I classification currently remains at the support staff level within DFCS.

Table 5.4

**Ratio of Support Staff to Social Worker IIIs
2008 to 2013**

	<u>Social Work Support Staff</u>	<u>Social Worker III/II (SWIII/II)*</u>	<u>Ratio of SWIII/II to Support</u>
2008	65	310	4.8:1
2009	63	304	4.9:1
2010	64	298	4.7:1
2011	47	273	5.8:1
2012	28	253	9.0:1
2013	27	236	8.7:1
6-year Average	49	279	6.3:1
Average (2008 - 2011)	59	296	5.0:1
Average (2012-2013)	28	245	8.9:1

Source: DFCS Organizational Charts January 2008 through June 2013

*The Historical Analysis of case carrying Social Worker III/II's to Social Work Support Staff is based on staff allocated to Emergency Response and Court Intervention (now the called Front End Bureau); Continuing Service Bureaus A, B, and C; South County, and Clover House staff that supervised parent-child visits for continuing social workers.

As the table shows, the ratio of case carrying social workers to support staff increased from 5.8 to 1 in 2011 to 9.0 to 1 in 2012, an increase of 55 percent. The impact of this change is that some help requests throughout the Department have been denied, because no support staff is available.⁵ Social Worker IIIs must then complete the support duties themselves. In July 2012, managers decided to offer overtime to Social Worker IIIs for this purpose. However, based on interviews with staff and Juvenile Dependency court observations, some Social Worker IIIs are unable to meet court requirements, such as ensuring required supervised parent-child visits while completing court reports, due to the lack of support staff. We therefore recommend the conversion of some existing staff to support staff, as described below.

Converting Existing Children’s Counselors to Social Worker Is

As discussed in Section 4, the Receiving, Assessment and Intake Center staffing includes 15 Children’s Counselors and two Senior Children’s Counselors who provide child care to youth while at the Center. Continuous 24-hour Counselor staffing is provided even when no children are present at RAIC. In Section 4, we recommend deleting 15 Children’s Counselor and two Senior Children’s Counselor positions, and adding 11 Social Worker I positions in the

⁵ When a Social Worker I Unit cannot fulfill a request, the Social Work Supervisor may forward the request to available Social Worker I staff in other units.

Section 5. Organizational Structure

FY 2014-15 budget process, allowing those workers to take on additional duties not only in the RAIC, but also in assisting case carrying social workers in other bureaus when the Receiving Center population is low.

Implementation of these two recommendations would result in a projected net savings of \$547,042, which is reported in Section 4. In addition, having sufficient social work staff could reduce overtime among Social Worker IIIs, providing additional savings and allowing them to prioritize their time toward writing court reports and other higher level casework to meet court mandated requirements and ensure the safety and welfare of children.

Summary of Recommended Organizational Structure Changes

As shown in Attachment 5.2, the audit's proposed changes to the Department's organizational structure will result in eight bureaus rather than the current 10 bureaus. Staffing will be reduced by a net of 10 positions through the deletion of currently vacant positions, deletion of positions through attrition, and the addition of one new Project Manager, as discussed in this section and Sections 4 and 6. Attachment 5.4 shows the organizational structure as it currently exists while Attachment 5.5 shows the proposed organizational structure. Table 5.5 summarizes all of the costs and savings associated with the proposed changes discussed in this section.

Table 5.5

**Summary of
Recommended Deletions and Promotion of Positions**

	<u>(Deletion)</u>	<u>Cost/(Savings)</u>
Vacant SSPM I from DI	(1)	(146,014)
Vacant Administrative Assistant from DI	(1)	(91,429)
SSPM I from SBB	(1)	(146,014)
SSPM I from SBC	(1)	(146,014)
Social Service Program Manager I from RAIC	(1)	(146,014)
<i>Subtotal Change in Staff and Costs/(Savings)</i>	<i>(5)</i>	<i>(\$675,485)</i>
Promotion of SSPM II to SSPM III		\$14,074
<i>Subtotal Costs/(Savings) from Promotions</i>		<i>\$14,074</i>
Net Cost/(Savings)		(\$661,411)

Note that the savings in Table 5.5 do not include the savings associated with the recommendation to reduce the Children's Counselors as these savings are already reported in Section 4 of this report. Because the Department receives reimbursements from State and/or federal sources for various positions, the above recommendations are estimated to save the County General Fund approximately \$159,104. This estimate is based on the average actual reimbursement by position in FY 2012-13, as provided by Fiscal Management Services of the Social Services Agency.

CONCLUSION

The current organizational structure of the Department of Family and Children's Services impedes the Department's ability to deliver services effectively and meet State- and court-mandated requirements for ensuring the safety and welfare of children in the County. For instance, one Social Service Program Manager III oversees a Front-End bureau that contains social workers with related, but disparate functions and demanding timelines – emergency response (ER) and court intervention services (DI) – making it challenging to effectively manage staffing for both. Social workers specializing in placement are located in two separate bureaus, Receiving, Assessment and Intake Center and the Family and Permanency Bureau, making it difficult to find appropriate placements for children taken into protective custody within the State mandated 24 hour timeframe. In addition, the number of social work support staff has decreased dramatically within the past four years and it has been challenging for case carrying social workers to meet court mandated requirements such as supervising parent-child visits and timely submitting court reports.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Department of Family and Children's Services:

- 5.1 Restructure the Front-End Bureau so that Emergency Response and the Child Abuse and Neglect (CAN) Reporting Center, which are related functions, are supervised by one Social Services Program Manager III, and Court Intervention Services (Dependency Investigations or DI) are supervised by a second SSPM III. (Priority 1)
- 5.2 Issue a special monthly report to the County Executive and Board of Supervisors reporting: (a) calls answered, received, and abandoned at the CAN Reporting Center, including calls from law enforcement, most of which are not currently tracked or reported; (b) referrals to Emergency Response; (c) removal of children from homes and intakes at the Receiving, Assessment and Intake Center; (d) actual petitions filed in the Superior Court; and (e) instances in which the Court agreed to keep children in protective custody, in order to access service delivery throughout the continuum of front-end child welfare services. (Priority 1)
- 5.3 Centralize the reporting of South County staff with bureaus based in San Jose to provide flexibility for evenly distributing caseloads and improve consistency in casework among comparable Social Workers. Transfer the vacant SSPM III code assigned to manage the South County Bureau to manage Dependency Investigations, along with the Administrative Assistant that supports the SSPM III. The vacant Administrative Assistant code in DI should be deleted to consolidate administrative functions. (Priority 1)
- 5.4 Delete the vacant SSPM I code assigned to DI, shift the SSPM I code for ER to the Receiving, Assessment and Intake Center (RAIC), retain the SSPM I code for CAN Reporting Center, and delete the SSPM I codes in the Continuing Service Bureaus through attrition so that SSPM Is perform the oversight of small to medium programs, as described in the job specifications for this position classification. (Priority 2)

Section 5. Organizational Structure

- 5.5 Shift case carrying social workers with Non-Minor Dependent cases in the Administrative Support Bureau (ASB) to a Continuing Service Bureau to create flexibility for handling the projected caseload and have the SSPM III in the ASB focus only on administrative functions. (Priority 2)
- 5.6 In concert with the creation of the Receiving, Recruitment and Placement Bureau recommended in Section 4, consolidate prevention and permanency services into a new Prevention and Permanency Bureau to concentrate expertise on the factors that promote family stability both before and after entering the child welfare system. Upgrade the SSPM II classification overseeing Receiving, Recruitment and Placement to an SSPM III position, to better align the job classification with its responsibilities, which include managing mandated services and overseeing \$12.3 million in contracted services. Delete the vacant Social Services Program Manager I position now overseeing RAIC, which would be replaced by the SSPM III. (Priority 2)
- 5.7 Reorganize office professional staff to better align resources with the functions of the proposed DFCS organizational structure as described in this section. (Priority 2)
- 5.8 During the FY 2014-15 budget process, delete 17 Counselor positions (including two Senior Counselor positions) and add 11 Social Worker I positions to staff the RAIC effective July 1, 2014 to eliminate underutilized positions by better matching authorized staffing with workload. (Priority 1)

SAVINGS, BENEFITS AND COSTS

Implementing the proposed organizational structure should allow management to more effectively utilize staff and ensure timely service delivery to clients. Further, realigning administrative and social work support staff, including converting Children's Counselors to Social Worker Is to augment the availability of support staff, should allow case carrying social workers to efficiently and effectively meet caseload demands. The net savings from the proposed additions, deletions, and promotion of positions is estimated to be \$661,411, of which \$159,104 is General Fund savings. This savings amount does not include the savings from Recommendation 5.8, which is already accounted for in Section 4 of this report.

Description of DFCS Bureaus

Administration – The Administration Bureau consists of the Director and Assistant Director of DFCS and their Executive Assistants. Historically, the Director has provided reports to external stakeholders and cross-system partners, and communicated priorities to managers, while the Assistant Director managed daily operations and case staffing. This division of labor shifted in spring 2013, and now both the Director and Assistant Director work together to address internal staffing issues.

Administrative Support Bureau – This bureau provides administrative support for the Department, including management and oversight of code control, the Master of Social Work internship program, special funds administration, drug testing, paternity testing, data analysis, the Department policies and procedures manual, and educational services. In addition, transitional age youth services such as case management for youth over 18, employment and training, housing, and other support services are housed within the Administrative Support Bureau.

Child Abuse and Neglect (CAN) Reporting Center – Referrals through the County’s call center are screened by staff in CAN. These social workers determine the type of response required, whether an Immediate Response (IR) that must be completed within two hours, Joint Response with the social worker and police within 30 minutes, a 10-day referral, or no response.

Family & Permanency Bureau – The Family & Permanency Bureau coordinates placement for children, including recruiting and licensing foster homes, placing children taken into custody into appropriate locations, finalizing adoptions, and post-adoption services.

Family Resource Centers (FRC) – This bureau houses three resource centers that target specific groups of DFCS client families, which include the Ujirani FRC (African-Ancestry families), Asian-Pacific Islander FRC, and Nuestra Casa FRC (Spanish-speaking families). Services provided include case management for voluntary cases, parenting classes, housing vouchers, and family conference team meetings.

Front-End Bureau – The Front-End Bureau consists of two divisions that were formerly separate bureaus, but are now managed by one Social Service Program Manager III.

Emergency Response (ER) – Social workers in the Emergency Response Division respond to the referrals screened by CAN staff. They determine if the child needs to be placed into protective custody or not. If the ER social worker decides that the child should remain with the parents, but be placed under informal supervision or voluntary maintenance, then the case is assigned to a Continuing social worker in Service Bureau B, Service Bureau C, South County, Family Resource Center, or a special unit in Court Intervention (Dependency Investigations).

Court Intervention or Dependency Investigations (DI) – If the ER social worker determines that a juvenile court action is necessary, then the case is assigned to a Dependency Investigations social worker. These social workers further investigate the case and determine whether to file a petition of abuse and neglect with the Juvenile

Dependency Court. Based on the petition, if the judge decides that the child should be placed into custody, the DI social worker must file reports and attend hearings to determine what will happen to the child and family.

Receiving, Assessment, & Intake Center (RAIC) – If no immediate placement alternative is available, children removed from their parents or legal guardians may be taken to this facility following investigations of child abuse or neglect. Within 24 hours of the child’s arrival, the RAIC staff are responsible for identifying residential placements for these children, whether with a relative, foster family or other emergency placement.

Service Bureaus B and C – Once a judge determines what should happen to a child and family in which petition allegations of abuse and neglect are true, supervision of the family is transferred to what is known as a Continuing social worker in either Service Bureaus B, C or South County. The Continuing social workers in these units oversee implementation of the family’s case plan, including coordinating any services to be provided to the parents and child, and arranging for visitation between the parents and child, in cases where the child is temporarily placed outside the home. The social worker visits the parents and child at least monthly, as described above, and prepares reports to the Court on their progress with the case plan. The Continuing worker also investigates any new allegations of abuse and neglect that are made against the parents of the children the worker is overseeing, if the children remained in the home during Department supervision.

South County – Staff in this bureau are located in Gilroy to serve families located in the Southern part of the County. The bureau includes an Emergency Response unit, two Continuing Social Workers units, the Gilroy Family Resource Center, a Social Worker I unit, and clerical staff.

Attachment 5.2
Summary of Proposed Changes to DFCS Organizational Structure¹

Existing Bureaus and Managerial Span of Control			Proposed Bureaus and Managerial Span of Control			Key Changes	
Bureau	SSPM	Staff		SSPM	Staff	Bureau	Staff
Administration	N/A	4	Administration	N/A	4	None	-
Administrative Support Bureau (ASB)	SSPM III	38	Administrative Support Bureau	SSPM III	49	Shift of Non-Minor Dependent Unit to SBC; addition of Project Manager; and clerical reorg.	11
Child Abuse and Neglect (CAN) Reporting Center	SSPM I	21	CAN / Emergency Response (ER)	SSPM III	118	Combine CAN/ER; centralize reporting of South County ER unit; shift 7 vacant Social Worker III codes to CAN; shift 1 vacant Social Work Supervisor Code to CAN; and clerical reorg.	97
Family & Permanency Bureau (FPB)*	SSPM II	41	RAIC / Recruitment / Placement	SSPM III	73	Consolidate RAIC, Recruitment and Placement staff currently in RAIC, FPB, and FRC; promote SSPM II to III; bring in filled SSPM I position from ER; add 11 Social Worker Is; and clerical reorg.	32
Family Resource Centers (FRC)	SSPM II	39	Permanency & Prevention	SSPM II	43	Consolidate Permanency and Prevention staff currently in FPB and FRC; centralize reporting of some South County staff; and clerical reorg.	4
Front-End (Emergency Response and Court Intervention)*	SSPM III	158	Court Intervention	SSPM III	78	Separate ER and Court Intervention staff; bring in filled SSPM III and Administrative Assistant positions from South County, delete vacant SSPM I and Administrative Assistant codes	-80
Receiving, Assessment, & Intake Center (RAIC)	SSPM I	34	Receiving, Assessment, & Intake Center (RAIC)	N/A	0	Consolidate staff to RAIC / Recruitment / Placement bureau; delete vacant SSPM I; shift Administrative Assistant to ASB (per union approved clerical reorg), delete 15 Children's Counselors and 2 Sr. Children's Counselors; and clerical reorg.	-34
Service Bureau B (SBB)	SSPM III	90	Service Bureau B	SSPM III	87	Delete SSPM I code; shift 4 vacant Social Worker IIIs to CAN; shift 1 Social Work Supervisor to CAN due to significant Social Worker III vacancies in SBB and need in CAN; and clerical reorg.	-3
Service Bureau C (SBC)	SSPM III	81	Service Bureau C	SSPM III	86	Delete SSPM I code; shift 3 vacant Social Worker IIIs to CAN; bring in NMD unit from ASB; and clerical reorg.	5
South County	SSPM III	42	South County	N/A	0	Centralize reporting to ASB, ER, SBC, and Permanency & Prevention	-42
Department Total		548	Department Total		538	Department Total	-10

1 - The existing bureaus and managerial span of control are based on a June 2013 organizational chart. As stated in the Introduction, there are 550 Full Time Equivalent staff in the FY 2013-14 budget.

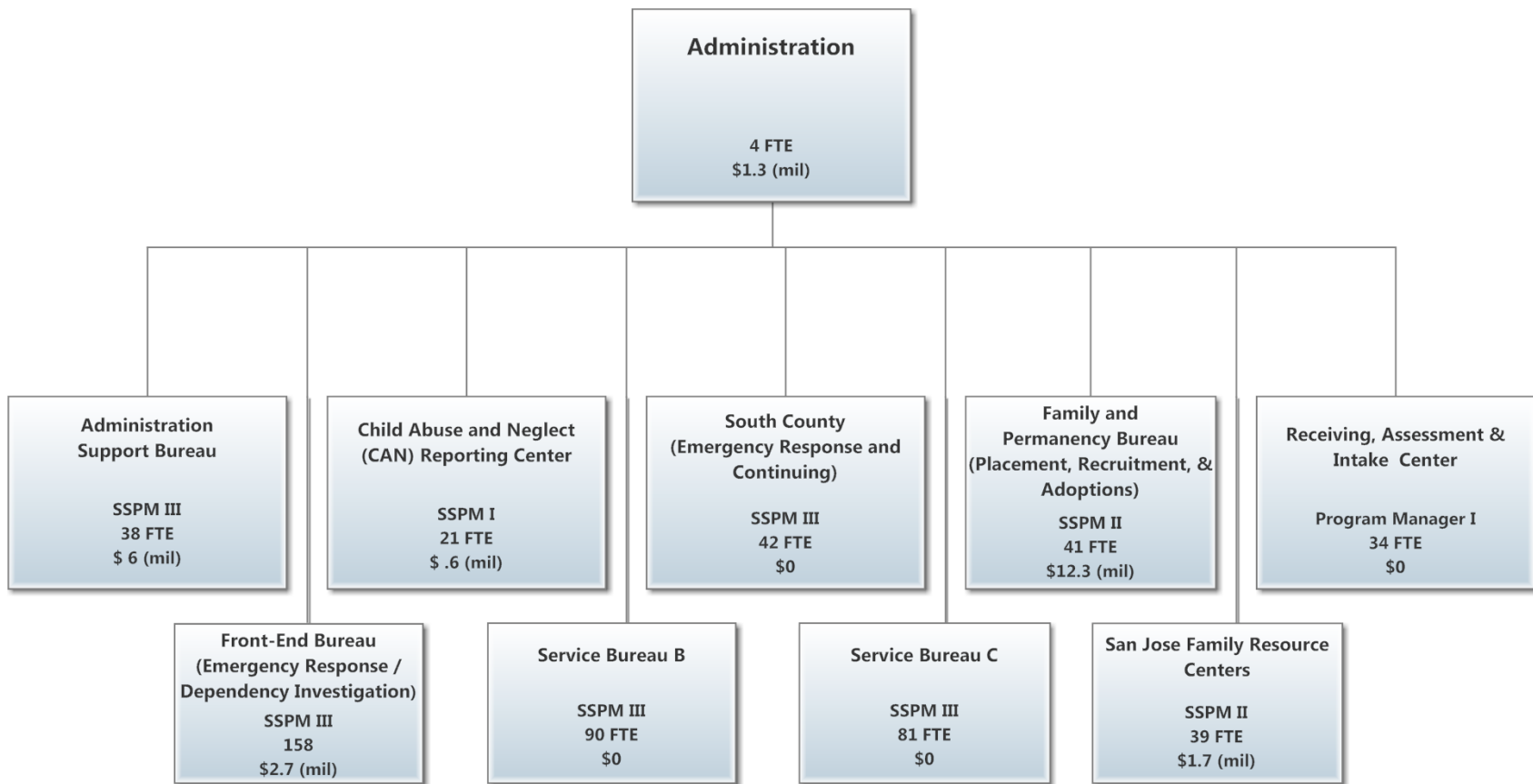
* This total count for the Front-End Bureau includes a Social Worker II that is currently on a Leave of Absence, which is considered a 0.0 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) in the DFCS organizational chart. However, for our analysis, we assume that a full FTE is needed to meet the demands of current workload, and therefore, included this position in our staff counts. The audit's staffing analysis is based on Departmental organizational charts as of June 5, 2013, which include a total of 41 FTE in the Family and Permanency Bureau. Subsequent information provided by the Department indicates 42 FTE in this bureau, which is not depicted in this Attachment.

Attachment 5.3
Comparison of DFCS and Management Audit Division Proposed Clerical Reorganizations*

DFCS August 2013 Final Clerical Reorganization			Management Audit Division Proposed Clerical Reorganization		
Bureau(s)	Functions	Total Staff	Bureau(s)	Functions	Total Staff
Administrative Support Bureau	Transition Age Youth Services, Educational Services, Child Health & Disability Program, Psychotropic Medication, Drug/Paternity Testing, International Compact on the Placement of Children, Placement Tracking, JV225	16	Administrative Support Bureau /Lobby (including centralized South County reporting)	Transition Age Youth Services, Educational Services, Child Health & Disability Program, Psychotropic Medication, Drug/Paternity Testing, JV225, Law Enforcement, Lobby/LiveScan, South County Lobby and other clerical staff	21
Emergency Response/ Child Abuse And Neglect	Emergency Response, Call Center	14	Emergency Response/ Child Abuse And Neglect	Emergency Response, Call Center, South County ER clerical staff	16
DI/RAIC	Court Services, RAIC	17	DI	Court Services	13
San Jose Family Resource Center/South County	South County Lobby and other clerical staff, South County ER clerical staff, Joint Decision Making, Parent Education, San Jose Family Resource Center Lobby staff	16	Permanency & Prevention	Adoption & Post Adoption, Bay Area Supervisors of Adoption staff, Parent Education, San Jose Family Resource Center Lobby staff, Messenger Drivers	10
Family & Permanency Bureau /Lobby	Licensing & Recruitment, Bay Area Supervisors of Adoption staff, 299-KIDS (for potential foster parents), Adoption & Post Adoption, Law Enforcement, Lobby/LiveScan	14	RAIC/Recruitment/Placement	RAIC, Licensing & Recruitment, 299-KIDS (for potential foster parents), International Compact on the Placement of Children, Placement Tracking, Joint Decision Making	19
Service Bureaus B & C	Support for Continuing Social Workers, Messenger Drivers	17	Service Bureaus B & C	Support for Continuing Social Workers, 1 clerk from ASB for non-minor dependent social workers	15
Total		94	Total		94

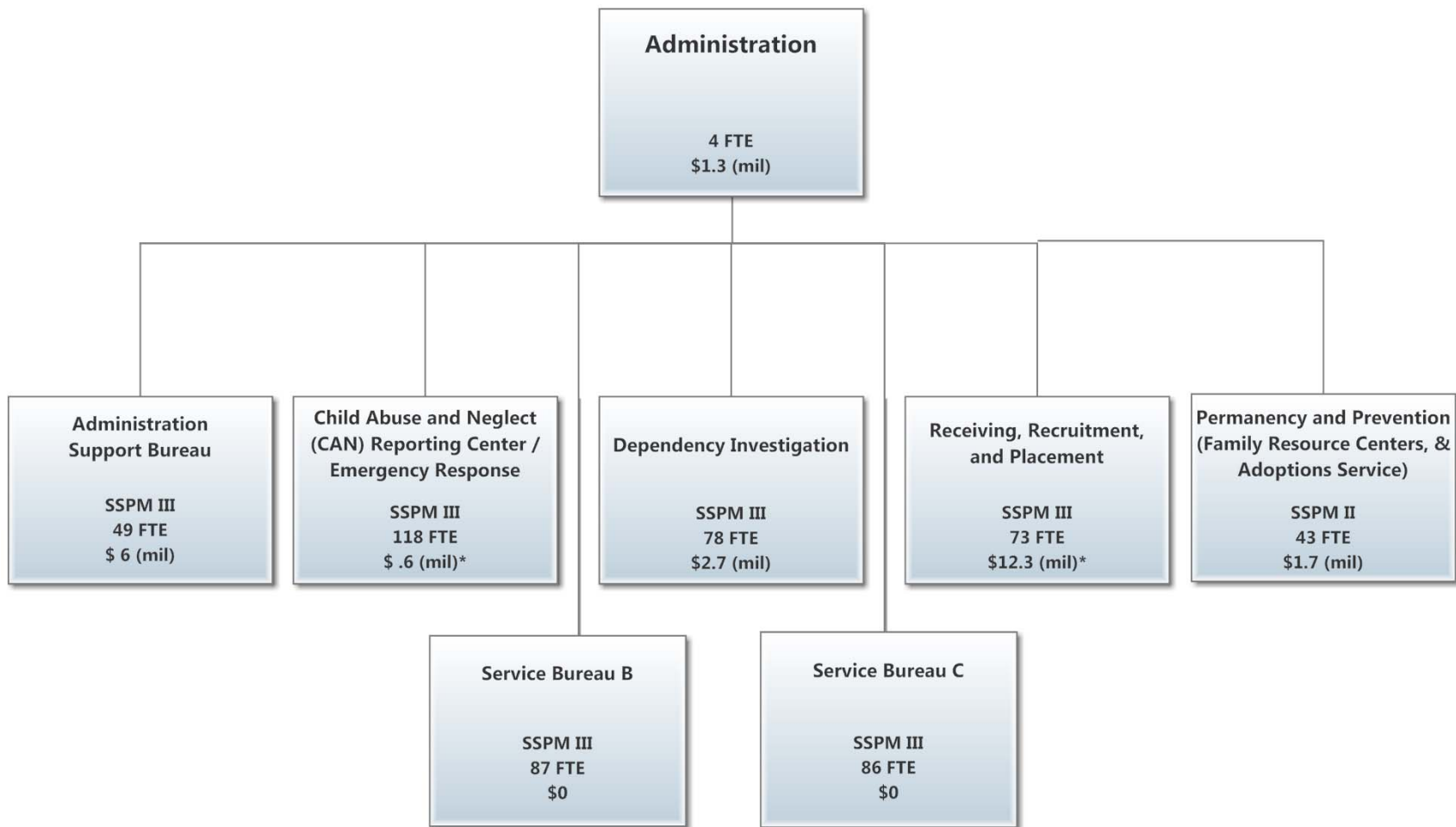
*The staff numbers exclude Office Management Coordinators, Executive and Administrative Assistants.

Attachment 5.4: Distribution of Existing 548 FTE* in DFCS, including Total Value of Contract Expenditures by Bureau



*The audit's staffing analysis is based on Departmental organizational charts as of June 5, 2013, which include a total of 41 FTE in the Family and Permanency Bureau. Subsequent information provided by the Department indicates 42 FTE in this bureau, which is not depicted in this total.

Attachment 5.5: Proposed Distribution of Existing 538* FTE in DFCS, including Total Value of Contract Expenditures by Bureau



*The audit’s staffing analysis is based on Departmental organizational charts as of June 5, 2013, which include a total of 41 FTE in the Family and Permanency Bureau. Subsequent information provided by the Department indicates 42 FTE in this bureau, which is not depicted in this total.

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Section 6. Contract Monitoring and Management

Background

- In FY 2012-13, the Department of Family and Children's Services managed approximately 126 contract agreements with 68 vendors, amounting to \$26 million annually. These contracts to provide services to DFCS client families are jointly monitored by staff at various levels in the Department, for programmatic performance, and by the Social Services Agency's (SSA) Office of Contract Management (OCM), for technical assistance and financial monitoring.

Problem

- Contract monitoring is not coordinated within the Department, no guidelines or policy manuals exist for contract monitors, and the intensity of monitoring varies significantly among contracts. As an example, the Department does not maintain consolidated records or produce comprehensive management reports to track the number and total value of its contracts.

Adverse Effect

- The lack of coordinated contract oversight impedes the Department's ability to meet contract renewal deadlines, and frequently requires the Department to seek retroactive approval from the Board of Supervisors for lapsed contract agreements. This results in either the suspension of services or ongoing service delivery without a valid agreement. Further, the County Controller cannot legally pay for contract services if the contract has not been approved by the Board of Supervisors.
- Inadequate monitoring also increases the risk that contractors may fail to comply with contract requirements, provide inadequate services, and receive payment for work not performed. A July 2012 review of the wraparound contracts by the Management Audit Division found that two providers were required to repay the County \$2,250,000 on October 1, 2011 and \$750,000 on December 15, 2011.

Recommendations, Savings and Benefits

- It is recommended that DFCS establish a new management position in the Administrative Support Bureau to coordinate contract program monitoring, standardize contractor performance measures, and develop a Department-wide contract policies and procedures manual as described in this section. Implementing these recommendations would enable the Department to improve its management of \$26 million of contract services, prevent unauthorized expenditures and improve enforcement and compliance with contract terms.

Overview of DFCS Contracts and Program Monitoring

During FY 2012-13, the Department of Family and Children's Services had 126 agreements with 68 external service providers. These agreements vary widely in size, scope and service. The

Section 6. Contract Monitoring and Management

majority of contracts used to solicit services for DFCS clients from external vendors are categorized as either Board Contracts or Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) Agreements. Board Contracts may be with a single vendor for one specific service, or may be a Master Contract agreement with one vendor providing multiple services to DFCS clients. Typically, Board Contracts are used for contracts that exceed \$100,000. MOU Agreements also require Board approval, but may be negotiated by the Department under authority delegated by the Board. The Department also maintains several Intra-Agency agreements, Operating Agreements and grant agreements; most of these agreements have either no monetary value or simply represent an intra-governmental transfer of funds. The remainder of this section focuses on the agreements earlier described that are for service purchases, based on information received from the Department as of March 2013.

The total value of such agreements, based on Departmental data, is about \$26 million for FY 2012-13. Most of the agreements are for legally-mandated services, and portions of their cost are reimbursed by the State and federal governments. Reimbursements are calculated quarterly, and County General Fund costs for each agreement can vary from one quarter to the next, making it difficult to estimate such costs on an annual basis. However, based on data for the period from April-June 2013, General Fund expenditures totaled \$3,433,057, or 42 percent of the total expenditure for a sample of 11 contracts reviewed by Management Audit staff. For these 11 contracts, the remaining 58 percent of expenditures was reimbursed by the State (42 percent) and the federal government (16 percent). According to the Agency's Chief Fiscal Officer, the estimated 42 percent General Fund expenditure applies only to this sample of 11 contracts, and may not be applicable to all 126 Department contracts, which may have different levels of General Fund subsidy.

Contract Monitoring Responsibilities Shared by OCM and DFCS

Monitoring responsibilities for these contracts are split between DFCS, which monitors contractors' service delivery program performance, and the Social Services Agency's Office of Contract Management (OCM), which generally oversees the fiscal and business management of contracts, such as proper contractor invoicing and contractor liability insurance status.¹ The goal of program monitoring, for which DFCS is responsible, is "to review and evaluate contracts to ensure the objectives of a contract are accomplished and vendors meet their responsibilities," according to an OCM policy document.

The program monitoring responsibility for contracts providing services to DFCS clients is broadly spread, as shown in the following table.

¹ In addition, OCM oversees both the business and program performance aspects of about \$1 million in contracts providing services through the County's Child Abuse Council. These contracts, because they are outside DFCS' monitoring responsibility, were excluded from our analysis.

Table 6.1

Summary of DFCS Contracts by Bureau

<u>Bureau/Department</u>	<u>Number of Contracts</u>	<u>Estimated Value of Contracts</u>
<u>DFCS</u>		
Family & Permanency	40	12,339,110
Administrative Support	35	5,996,656
Family Resource Centers	25	1,659,695
Front-End Services	10	2,655,359
South County	2	-
Child Abuse & Neglect Call Center	1	60,000
DFCS Director's Office	7	1,291,613
<u>Non-DFCS</u>		
Administrative Office	4	124,700
Dept. of Employment & Benefit Services	2	1,955,695
Grand Total	126	26,082,828

Source: DFCS-Compiled List of Contracts as of March 2013

As Table 6.1 shows, about 75 percent of the contracts, and about the same proportion of the total contract value, are concentrated in three DFCS bureaus. However, about eight percent of the contract value, slightly more than \$2 million, is actually monitored outside the Department, in the SSA Administrative Office, and the Department of Employment and Benefit Services.

Both OCM and program monitors are supposed to complete a mid-fiscal-year review for each contract.² Source documents for this review include the contract documents, quarterly or monthly reports prepared by the service vendor, a mid-year self-evaluation report by the contractor, client case files, invoices and contractor budget documents. The review may also include a site visit to the location of services or wherever case files may be stored. OCM staff reported that site visits normally occur only for contracts with a total value exceeding \$100,000 a year, or those for which the General Fund share of cost equals or exceeds \$25,000 annually. During Fiscal Year 2012-13, approximately 11 such site visits were completed for DFCS contracts by OCM. Records for these site reviews are on file with OCM; of the audit sample, four contracts were selected for a site visit during FY 2012-13. Our review of this aspect of contract monitoring was limited, because the previous *Management Audit of Social Services Agency Administration and Support Services*, assessed OCM functions, and made seven recommendations for

² According to OCM management, mid-fiscal-year reviews should occur for all 126 DFCS contracts. However, OCM does not maintain a master list to track how many reviews were conducted in a given year or when the most recent desk review was completed. As a result, the audit team was unable to determine the total number of these reviews completed for DFCS contracts in FY 2012-13.

Section 6. Contract Monitoring and Management

improvements, which were fully or partially agreed to by SSA, and are being implemented via an analysis of staffing needs in OCM and other actions to be taken by the Agency and other County staff. The program monitoring of contractor performance was more problematic in structure and results. At the time of the audit, DFCS practice was to assign program monitoring to the Social Services Program Manager (SSPM) overseeing the practice area mostly closely aligned with a contractor’s services. As an example, a contractor providing parenting classes designed to serve African-American families through the Ujirani Family Resource Center (FRC) would be assigned for oversight to the Social Services Program Manager II in charge of the three San Jose-based FRCs. The relevant SSPM could then monitor the contract as part of his or her duties, or delegate that day-to-day function to other staff within the bureau, while retaining ultimate responsibility. In practice, this has resulted in program monitoring being diffused among staff in a wide variety of job classifications, from clerical staff, to the DFCS Department Director, as shown in the following table.

Table 6.2
Summary of DFCS Program Monitors by Job Classification

<u>Monitor Job Classification</u>	<u>Number of Contracts</u>	<u>FY 2012-13 Amount</u>
<u>Line staff (14 Total)</u>	79	22,221,231
(5) Social Work Supervisor	42	14,136,315
(6) Social Work Coordinator II	29	5,959,890
(1) Employment Program Supervisor	4	0
(1) Office Management Coordinator	2	169,331
(1) Administrative Support Officer III	1	1,955,695
(1) Management Analyst	1	0
<u>Mid-level Management (10 Total)</u>	40	3,459,410
(1) Social Services Program Manager, III	33	2,039,908
(1) Management Analysis Program Manager II/III	2	100,900
(1) SSA/Staff Development	2	930,280
(2) Social Services Program Manager, I	2	378,322
(1) Project Manager	1	10,000
<u>Executive Management (2 Total)</u>	4	334,133
(1) Director	1	5,600
(1) Assistant Director	3	328,533
<u>Unassigned</u>	3	68,054
Monitor unassigned	3	68,054
Grand Total	126	\$26,082,828

Source: DFCS-Compiled List of Contracts as of March 2013

Diffuse Responsibilities and Lack of Guidance, Create Problems and Risks

Of the 26 monitors we identified, 14 are line staff without management training or responsibilities, 10 are mid-level managers, and two are executive level. The bulk of contracts were actually overseen by Social Work Supervisors, Social Work Coordinator IIs and Social Services Program Manager IIIs. Of these three classifications, only the Social Services Program Manager classification has contract administration and monitoring as part of the job duties included in its classification, and as part of the job skills required, as shown in Attachment 6.1. As discussed below, staff assigned monitoring responsibilities do not have prior experience or adequate training to evaluate contractor performance.

Complicating this diffusion of responsibility, contracts we reviewed varied in the monitoring requirements, depending on the actual language in each contract. Sample activities included periodic meetings and phone calls with service providers, tracking monthly or quarterly contractor reports, review of client sign-in sheets, review of databases to monitor timely and accurate input by vendors, invoice review and general troubleshooting of vendor problems.

Lack of Training for Program Monitors Results in Inconsistent Monitoring

Not only is the nature of the DFCS contract monitors' reviews not standardized, monitors receive no standardized training in how to conduct their oversight. All of the program monitors interviewed for this audit stated they received no training for this duty. While OCM has a manual that includes an appendix discussing program monitoring, that appendix focuses on how to conduct OCM's mid-year and annual reviews, primarily the required site visits, and does not address day-to-day contract oversight, such as invoice review and approval, consistent tracking of client referrals, interpretation of contractor quarterly reports, and ensuring similar service levels across vendors providing the same service.³ As an example, the July 2012 Management Audit review of the wraparound services contracts found an enormous variance (\$1,476 versus \$4,833 per child) in the monthly cost of services provided by the four contractors for the wraparound services during the most recent three years of the contracts. However, the reasons for these discrepancies were not explored by monitoring staff. In addition, two of the four contracts required annual reimbursement payments of excess funding totaling \$3 million to be paid by the contractors, including \$2,250,000 due October 1, 2011 and \$750,000 due December 15, 2011.

Scattered Contract Records Impede Department's Monitoring Abilities

During the audit, the Department was unable to provide Management Audit staff a consolidated list of contracts, program monitors or funding levels. Management Audit staff compiled this section based on estimates of total numbers of contracts, costs and monitoring staff via interviews and other information obtained from various Department staff, and we believe it is accurate as of March 2013. This list is included as Attachment 6.2.

³ The Department's Administrative Support Bureau staff had not received a copy of this manual until August 2013.

Section 6. Contract Monitoring and Management

Program contract monitors in DFCS frequently need access to basic information from OCM, which they can get only with difficulty, as contract files are limited in access to OCM staff, in most cases, except on request. Two of the eight DFCS monitors interviewed did not have copies of either the current or most recent contract documents, which would presumably form the basis for their monitoring. Another monitor did not know when a contract we asked about was scheduled for renewal, even though such knowledge should prompt monitors to review contractor performance information and assess whether a contract should in fact be renewed. Without a centralized tracking tool, Department management has no way of knowing whether the monitors are fulfilling their function, and whether contractors are performing as required. The absence of such reports impairs the Department's ability to assess the impact and value of the \$26 million paid to contractors to provide client services.

Since initial audit field work, the Department has initiated efforts to collect and maintain an updated list of contracts, program monitors and total contract value. In addition, OCM has created a share drive that allows select DFCS management staff view-only access to important contract-related documents and since April 2013, meets weekly with DFCS staff to discuss upcoming contract deadlines and issues. The audit team would like to recognize the significant efforts that have been made by the Department and OCM. However, in spite of this progress, no single person with the Social Services Agency or the Department has a full grasp of programmatic monitoring levels, vendor performance or client outcomes.

Transmittal Delays Impact Service Delivery

One practical effect of this diffusion of responsibility has been problems in renewing Board-approved contracts on a timely basis. Normally, when such a renewal occurs, a transmittal is prepared for the Board describing the contract, its purpose and the justification for contracting for the services. DFCS staff are responsible to prepare these documents, which often come to the Board near the end of the fiscal year, because contracts run on a fiscal-year basis, and need to be renewed prior to the July 1 start of the new year. Since early spring 2013, due to staffing and other changes within the Agency, the Department's responsibilities to draft and coordinate transmittals have increased without a clear transition plan, clarification of the Department's role in the transmittal preparation process, or an ability to forecast transmittal workload. Between January and August 2013, the Department submitted 17 transmittals that were contract-related. According to Administrative Support Bureau staff, approximately 223 staff hours were required to shepherd the transmittal through the vetting and review process. On average, this represents approximately 13 hours per transmittal, which is workload that must be absorbed by existing staff who have not received training or guidance on this function.

Given the high volume and dollar value of DFCS contracts discussed earlier, it is especially critical that all parties involved receive documentation and supporting materials for Board transmittals with sufficient time for review and approval. According to Agency and Department staff, DFCS consistently has the highest volume of transmittals that must be approved by the Board. The transmittal preparation process is significant, and entails coordination not only within the Department, but across the entire Social Services Agency. Transmittals must be reviewed by several persons outside of the Department, which may include the Agency's Chief Fiscal Officer, Agency Director, Agency Deputy Director as well as County Counsel. As a result, delays during

Section 6. Contract Monitoring and Management

any one step in the process can greatly impact whether a contract is renewed before it lapses. For example, in June 2013, eight DFCS contracts transmittals were submitted for Board review as required, but four others were not. While several factors contributed to the delays of these four specific transmittals, the overall lack of contracts coordination and planning has inhibited the Department's ability to provide important client services, as described below.

Without timely transmittal submission, the Department must later seek retroactive approval by the Board of Supervisors. Such time lags in transmittal preparation and review can create situations in which client services are either temporarily suspended, or continue without valid operating agreements. The latter situation could result in either a contractor being paid without valid legal authority from the Board of Supervisors, or the contractor carrying out work without assurance of payment. The result of this could be a significant liability to the County, and is also problematic because the County Controller cannot legally pay for the services provided without a Board-approved contract. In some instances, delayed transmittals may even jeopardize external funding for DFCS contracted services that are financed by third-party grants.

Department Lacks Designated Contracts Coordinator

The Department's 126 contract agreements comprise nearly half of all Social Services Agency contracts; however, no single individual within DFCS is tasked with coordinating the Department's contract monitoring or management. In December 2012, a Project Manager position was transferred from the Department of Employment and Benefit Services (DEBS) to DFCS's Administrative Support Bureau (ASB). This position was intended to provide additional project management assistance to the ASB SSPM III, who was the designated program monitor for 33 DFCS contracts in FY 2012-13.⁴ Given the increased contracts workload discussed above, this new Project Manager role has assumed many responsibilities pertaining to contracts, which consumes approximately half of the Project Manager's workload.

In spite of this additional resource, the Department's increased role in coordinating contract transmittals, renewals, etc. has exhausted existing staff resources. In early spring and late summer 2013, this problem was exacerbated by the loss of two key OCM staff that were very familiar with DFCS contracts, shifting more of this work back to Department staff, and creating a situation that resulted in missing the four contract renewal deadlines. Such delayed action with regard to transmittal submission not only jeopardizes funding for important services, but also hinders service delivery. As an example, at the close of Fiscal Year 2012-13 two service agreements (one for child psychiatric evaluation services and another for court advocacy services for youth)⁵ were denied cost reimbursement by the California Department of Social Services. When the Board of Supervisors and Employee Services Agency terminated all SSA dependent contractor agreements, the Department contracted out these child psychiatric evaluation services

⁴ It is noted that the SSPM III position overseeing the Administrative Support Bureau will become vacant by the end of October due to staffing changes. In late September 2013, the Department began recruiting to fill this position.

⁵ Historically, child psychiatric evaluation services had been provided to the County through a dependent contractor agreement, which would qualify for State cost reimbursement. Court advocacy services were funded through the Social Services General Fund Contracts pool, but eventually the Court Appointed Special Advocate contract was transferred to DFCS for management and oversight.

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using General Fund dollars to pay for the contract.⁶ In 2013, the Social Services' Agency's Chief Fiscal Officer sought State reimbursement for both court advocacy and child psychiatric services, disagreeing with the State's position that these services were not eligible for reimbursement. Ultimately, representatives from the State advised Financial Management Services (FMS) that these services are only eligible for reimbursement if provided by in-house staff, not contractors. At this stage, FMS notified the Department that no funding source for either service provider was available, and alternative funding would have to be identified. This notification triggered a series of delays in the renewal of these service agreements. As a result, child psychiatric evaluations were suspended, and court advocacy services for DFCS youth continued in spite of a lapsed agreement.

The diffusion of monitoring responsibilities to program line staff also results in gaps in the frequency of monitoring contractors. As part of this audit, we reviewed 11 contracts overseen by eight staff spread across DFCS, DEBS and the SSA Agency Office. While two of the 11 contracts, for Differential Response and Independent Living programs⁷ have specialized databases to track client outcomes, limitations in the ability to extract information from them lead staff to instead track information manually using electronic spreadsheets created by individual program monitors. Nine of the 11 contracts we reviewed require quarterly or annual reports by service providers, either on a specific date or within 20 days of the end of a calendar quarter. Vendor reports were available for seven of the nine agreements for at least the past fiscal year. However, two monitors stated they were unaware of quarterly reports and did not see them on a regular basis. In one of these instances, the monitor was responsible for \$3 million in annual contract expenditure, but had not received either physical or electronic vendor reports. Furthermore, there was no indication from our review that anyone other than the individual monitor ever received these reports, and what process was to be followed if a monitor identified performance issues with a specific contractor.

Finally, the lack of program monitoring procedures and training results in lack of guidance regarding whether a contractor has performed the services for which payment is requested via an invoice. At least six of the monitors interviewed for this audit were responsible for reviewing such invoices, and two monitors stated that their review was limited to making sure the invoiced amount is about the same each month, as opposed, for example, to spot-checking the hours of service reported, the tasks carried out, or other contractor information, to make sure it is reasonable under the contract. With consistent invoice review techniques, the Department could prevent inappropriate payments. For example, standardized training on how to read and compare invoices against contract terms would better equip monitors with the skills necessary to identify potential errors that could result in over- or double-payment for services. While actual invoices

⁶ The Department and Financial Management Services provided conflicting explanations for why these services were contracted out. In terms of the recommendations made in this section, the historic justifications for contracting out these services do not impact the critical need for greater contract coordination within DFCS.

⁷ Differential Response is a non-mandated contract service provided by Gardner Family Care Corporation and Unity Care Group, which offers an alternate and "broader set of response to reports of possible child abuse or neglect, including prevention and early intervention, engaging families to address issues of safety and risk, and improving access to services, including allowing voluntary access by families." The Independent Living Program, offered through a vendor named Family and Children's Services, provides mandated services to current and former foster youth to assist in youth with the development of self-sufficiency skills as youth transition from the juvenile dependency system to independent living.

Section 6. Contract Monitoring and Management

were not reviewed as part of the sample, in the absence of formal training, the risk for improper payment remains significant. In the July 2013 Management Audit of the County Probation Department, we noted similar types of problems in contract management, and documented that at least one contractor was in fact paid for services never rendered.

To improve coordination of program monitoring and data collection among staff assigned this function, DFCS should add a Project Manager position in the Administrative Support Bureau with the primary responsibility for improving contract management. This position should:

- Maintain and regularly update a master list of DFCS contracts, including, but not limited to, designated DFCS and OCM monitors for each contract, contract start and end dates, who receives contractor invoices for each contract, and performance reporting dates and requirements for each contractor.
- Serve as the liaison between OCM and DFCS contract monitors, with DFCS monitors reporting to this position for contract purposes, providing monitoring information to the Project Manager to create a centralized comprehensive repository of program information, vendor reports and client outcomes for each contract.
- Develop, in concert with OCM and SSA Staff Training and Development, a comprehensive description of contract monitor duties and responsibilities, a resource manual to assist in carrying them out, and introductory training, based on the manual, for new program monitors. The new OCM Contracts Management Manual could serve as a template for this new manual, which should also include specific invoice review procedures.
- Evaluate monitoring assignment workloads. Our review found both high- and low-dollar value contracts requiring extensive monitoring workloads, as well as both high- and low-dollar contracts with modest workloads. The level of associated work depends largely on the individual contract. The Project Manager needs to balance the workloads assigned to the different staff responsible for contract monitoring, working with the supervisors to whom monitors are assigned in order to balance contract monitoring against other duties.
- Develop and provide higher-level management information on contractor performance to Department management, and for assisting program monitors in developing responses to contractor performance issues.

In addition to the very concrete duties just described, the Project Manager for contracts would also provide the ability to strategically plan the contracting process, which is particularly important for those contracts being awarded via Requests for Proposals. By knowing when various key contracts are coming up for renewal, and working with Bureau chiefs and relevant program staff to assess the contract experience, the Project Manager would address key questions, including:

- Does the Department want to continue to contract for these services, or provide them in-house?

Section 6. Contract Monitoring and Management

- Does the Department want to change the number of contractors, perhaps to change how the services are provided regionally, or to various client subpopulations?
- Should the Department change the length of contracts, perhaps to permit a better assessment of client outcomes?
- How can the Department standardize contractor performance measures to track client outcomes across different vendors by client age, demographics, etc.?

Having a dedicated contract management position to address these questions would facilitate use of contract services to achieve the goals of the Social Services Agency's System Improvement Plan, and to address persistent DFCS policy concerns, such as the disproportionate involvement of families-of-color in the child welfare system.

The cost of this position would be \$151,580 annually. An estimated 75 percent of this amount (approximately \$113,533) would be funded with federal and State revenue, based on the actual funding of a Project Manager in the Administrative Services Bureau in FY 2012-13. The remaining 25 percent, or \$38,047, is estimated to be a General Fund expense. Funding for this new position could be realized from the savings that would result from the recommended deletion of vacant positions, as discussed in Section 5 on the Department's organizational structure. We believe the existing OCM contract database, based on information provided by the database vendor, could be expanded to track programmatic information with varying levels of access to DFCS monitors, vendors and management, at no additional cost to the County. These improvements would allow DFCS, in concert with OCM, to thoroughly monitor contractor performance, and determine whether the \$26 million in client services contract expenditure is resulting in desired client outcomes and value for the County.

CONCLUSION

Contract monitoring responsibilities in the Social Services Agency are divided, with DFCS responsible for monitoring contractor programmatic performance. Within DFCS, monitoring is diffused among many staff at varying levels of responsibility, many in classifications that do not require contract monitoring skills. Furthermore, DFCS does not have detailed written procedures pertaining to program monitoring of contracts and monitors have been provided no written guidance and no training in carrying out these responsibilities. As a result, contract renewal deadlines have been missed, documentation of contractor performance is not consistently maintained, and invoices are not always analyzed to determine if billed services have actually been performed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Department of Family and Children's Services should:

- 6.1 Create a new Contracts Project Manager position in the Administrative Services Bureau, with specific responsibility to manage contract oversight, with the various contract monitors in the department reporting to this position for contract reporting purposes. (Priority 2)

Section 6. Contract Monitoring and Management

- 6.2 Direct the Project Manager to maintain and regularly update a master list of DFCS contracts, including, but not limited to, designated DFCS and OCM monitors for each contract, contract start and end dates, who receives contractor invoices for each contract, and performance reporting dates and requirements for each contractor. (Priority 2)
- 6.3 Direct the Project Manager to create a comprehensive description of duties, a resource manual of procedures, and an introductory training program, for DFCS contract program monitors. The procedures and training should include, in concert with OCM, a standardized written invoice review procedure for program monitors. (Priority 3)
- 6.4 Direct the Project Manager to assess and balance contract monitoring workload among program monitors, in conjunction with their other Department responsibilities. (Priority 3)
- 6.5 Direct the Project Manager to develop high-level management information on contractor performance for presentation to Department and Agency management. (Priority 2)
- 6.6 Direct the Project Manager to pursue strategic planning in the contracting process, working with Bureau managers and relevant program staff as key categories of contracts are due for renewal, to determine if changes in contracted services are needed. (Priority 2)

SAVINGS, BENEFITS AND COSTS

Salary and benefits costs for a Project Manager position are estimated at \$151,580 annually. Of this, 25 percent, or \$38,047, is estimated to be a General Fund expense. This estimate is based on the actual General Fund share of the cost of a Project Manager in the Administrative Services Bureau during FY 2012-13. This position can be fully funded by realizing savings from the deletion of vacant positions as discussed in Section 5. Creation of such a position would improve the coordination of contract monitoring within DFCS and between DFCS and OCM. It would also improve the quality of contract monitoring, ensuring that contracts are renewed timely, contractor performance is properly monitored, and contractors are only paid for services rendered, at the performance level required, thereby maximizing the utility to the County and to DFCS clients of the \$26 million spent annually currently on contracted client services.



Social Services Program Manager III

Class Code:
Y30

Bargaining Unit: County Employees'
Management Association

COUNTY OF SANTA CLARA
Established Date: Jul 10, 2000
Revision Date: Nov 15, 2002

SALARY RANGE

\$45.23 - \$54.98 Hourly
\$3,618.24 - \$4,398.64 Biweekly
\$7,839.52 - \$9,530.39 Monthly
\$94,074.24 - \$114,364.64 Annually

DEFINITION:

Under direction, is responsible for the planning, development, organization, management, administration and evaluation of one or more major social services programs, employment and benefit services programs or special projects

Series Description

The Social Services Program Manager series describes levels of positions having managerial and supervisory responsibility for one or more Social Services Agency programs which provide direct service to the public or other public agencies. Social Services Program Managers typically report to an executive level manager and are held accountable for the success of the program or programs that they manage.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS:

Positions in these classifications represent the initial, mid-level, and senior management level of the Social Services Agency. Incumbents are responsible for one or more major client oriented programs or projects, which require significant planning and development efforts and typically the direction, coordination and supervision of professional, technical, paraprofessional and/or clerical staff through subordinate supervisors.

Incumbents typically report to executive management in a major department or program service area. This class is distinguished from other management classes by having major management and supervisory responsibility for a deemed program or several defined programs in social services or employment and benefits services, including acquiring and allocating resources, defining program objectives, preparing action plans and evaluating program outcomes or results. Incumbents function with a high level of autonomy and independence of decision-making, which have significant impacts on other county departments, federal and state agencies, and the local community. This class is typically involved in developing policy and strategic planning for the Social Services Agency, and also participates in county-wide planning and program development, including being part of state-wide and local task forces or committees.

Definition of Levels

Factors affecting the allocation of positions to this class include: 1) size of the program, including number of staff supervised, size of budget, and/or number and diversity of clients

served; number of management activities coordinated and number of services provided; size of department and organizational unit to which assigned; and/or 2) difficulty and complexity of the management activities as measured in terms of level and variety of professional staff managed and supervised; degree of impact on the service delivery system and the organizational unit, department, or County; variety and diversity of clients served; organizational stability and variety of programs to which assigned; and complexity or specialized nature of the management activity being supervised.

Social Services Program Manager I

This position is regarded as the first professional level of the SSPM series. Incumbents work under the supervision of senior management. Typically, this position will report to a higher level manager at the most senior level. These activities will normally involve either one service or a small to medium size number of directly interrelated services having a limited to moderate degree of impact on the Agency or County. The subject matter of the services may focus on a specific area and be of average to significant difficulty or complexity. As experience is gained, incumbents at this level perform a broader range of duties/responsibilities.

Social Services Program Manager II

Typically, incumbents in this position will, under direction of executive management, have responsibility for a district office/moderate to large size program which is of high complexity and responsibility. This position is regarded as mid-level in the SSPM series. Incumbents manage services that are of a sensitive nature and have a significant degree of impact on the Agency or County as a whole. Position responsibilities may involve technical or specialized subjects that require that incumbents utilize and be accountable for knowledge of specialized subject matter. Incumbents may assist or participate in state-wide and local task forces or committees designed to conduct strategic and county-wide planning efforts. As experience is gained, incumbents perform a broader range of duties and responsibilities.

Social Services Program Manager III

This is the senior level in this series. Under direction of executive management, incumbents have a great deal of discretion and operate with considerable independence in decision-making. Programs/district offices at this level are characterized as being very large in size, of the highest complexity and responsibility, or having a major impact on the Agency or County as a whole. Incumbents may be responsible for providing either a very large comprehensive service or a wide variety of related services of a highly sensitive nature serving a client population of very diverse interests. Programs have significant sensitivity and a high degree of private and/or governmental interaction. Incumbents use independent judgement to perform specialized, diverse, complex assignments, which may require extensive coordination and collaboration with other Social Services Agency departments, County departments, and outside agencies. SSPM IIIs are experts in Agency resources and specific subject areas who are significantly involved with developing and implementing policy and procedures for the Agency. They perform the most sensitive, controversial, and technically complex assignments, serve as leaders on multifaceted programs, and may take a leadership role as part of state-wide and local task forces or committees designed to conduct strategic and county-wide planning efforts.

TYPICAL TASKS:

- Plans, organizes, directs and coordinates the Social Services Agency activities of one or more programs/operations composed of staff of various job classifications and bargaining unit associations.
- Deals with all personnel aspects of staff, including recruitment, exam development, hiring training, evaluation, mentoring and progressive discipline.
- Provides technical resources to subordinate professional and technical staff for successful performance of their jobs.
- Provides case consultation which may be individually based or family focused or in regard to

a new program, as part of direction and guidance, and mentoring.

- Assists in the formation of administrative policies, procedures, controls and reporting systems.
- Assists in determination of the scope, character, and service delivery system of social services in the County of Santa Clara.
- Initiates and evaluates recommendations on goals, policies, plans, projects, programs and outcomes to meet community needs.
- Provides effective feedback to state and federal authorities on development of pending legislation or regulations and works with these representatives to ensure appropriate interpretation of requirements.
- Has responsibility for assuring compliance with Federal, State and County mandates relative to the programs assigned.
- Ensures and assesses service delivery system and customer satisfaction.
- Negotiates with bargaining units regarding contracts and other personnel issues.
- Develops visible and highly recognized partnerships with community organizations and other County departments or agencies; maintains liaison and represents Agency in contacts with public and private organizations, individual members of the public, and the Board of Supervisors.
- Develops public education/media campaigns, and delivers oral and written presentations to internal and external agencies and organizations.
- Responsible for contract administration, including the solicitation process, and monitors contract agencies and community based organizations.
- May give depositions, testify in court, meet and coordinate with law enforcement, County Counsel and other legal entities.
- Works with state and other agencies on interpretation of rulings involving court orders or decisions, legal mandates, or policy changes.
- Coordinates automation of program processes and general Agency support for staff and customers.
- Researchs funding alternatives, and administers public funds and any other type of funds, including grant funding.
- Develops justifications for budget requests on staffing, new programs, equipment, capital programs, maintenance and enhancement of existing programs, and initiates Performance Based Budgeting, including corrective action plans.
- Prepares reports and correspondence.
- Performs related work as required.

EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS:

Education and experience equivalent to graduation from an accredited college or university with major work in a behavioral science, social work, or closely related field and extensive supervisory or administrative experience which demonstrates the ability to perform the typical tasks.

Typically, allocation to a Social Services Program Manager I requires at least three (3) years of supervisory or administrative experience in the field of human services; allocation to a Social Services Program Manager II requires at least five (5) years of supervisory or administrative experience in the field of human services with at least three (3) years of management experience in a social services agency or program; allocation to a Social Services Program Manager III requires at least seven (7) years of supervisory or administrative experience in the field of human services with at least five (5) years of management experience in a social services agency or program.

Experience Note: At least four (4) years experience working in supervision and administration in a social work setting with children and families or adult and aging clients may be required for specific program assignments in the Department of Family and Children's Services or the Department of Adult and Aging Services.

Other requirements include sufficient education, training and experience, which directly demonstrates the possession and application of the following knowledges and abilities.

Knowledge of:

- Principles and practices of administration, management, organization, supervision, budget preparation, personnel and financial administration, and community relations.
- Program planning and development principles and techniques.
- Operation and functions of public assistance and social service agencies, including social services objectives applicable to areas of responsibility.
- Diversity issues as they impact the local community.
- Training and instructional methods and techniques.
- Current capabilities, processes, and applications of automation
- Program evaluation tools and techniques.
- Principal public and private resources available to the community for referral or utilization in social services programs.
- Laws, regulations and administrative guidelines which affect employment, training or public assistance and other social services applicable to areas of responsibility.
- Labor laws and administrative policies governing memoranda of understanding with various labor organizations.
- Welfare and Institutions Codes.
- Health and safety standards (such as ADA, OSHA, etc.)

Ability to:

- Effectively plan, organize and direct the activities of a variety of social work or employment and benefits program services and offices.
- Effectively select and hire staff, supervise subordinate managers (and other staff) and ensure appropriate orientation, training and development of program personnel.
- Effectively allocate resources and personnel.
- Develop and maintain internal operational procedures and policies for the programs/offices assigned.
- Interpret and assure the appropriate implementation of State and Federal regulations pertaining to the various programs assigned and keep abreast of developments related to program activities.
- Analyze procedures, data and other pertinent reports and recommend a course of action.
- Apply principles and theories of casework in a consultative and managerial capacity.
- Optimally utilize technology to automate processes and educate public on social service programs.
- Direct the development and preparation of a variety of plans, which include major needs assessments, demographic data, survey results and program designs.
- Consult with and advise the Department Director or other executive management staff on the activities, status and fiscal impact of programs or new program requirements.
- Establish cooperative and effective relationships with representatives of Federal, State and local agencies, other county agencies and departments, community resources, the general public, and others contacted in the course of work.
- Prepare and present oral and written reports clearly and concisely.
- Communicate effectively both orally and in writing to a diverse population.
- Create a customer friendly environment.
- Effectively represent the Agency before the Board of Supervisors, at meetings with State and Federal agency representatives and before other representatives, boards, commissions or citizen groups.

FY 2012-13 DFCS CONTRACT PROGRAM MONITORS

	B	E	G	H	K	L	M	N	O
1	Bureau	Monitor Classification	VENDOR NAME	CONTRACT NAME	CONTRACT TYPE	Funding Source	FY13 Amount	START DATE	END DATE
2	Admin Support	Employment Program Supervisor	COMMUNITY TECHNOLOGY ALLIANCE	HELP MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS	MOU		0	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
3	Admin Support	Employment Program Supervisor	SCNHHS-MENTAL HEALTH	MENTAL HEALTH AND SSA CC25: UPLIFT TRANSIT PASS	IA		0	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
4	Admin Support	Employment Program Supervisor	PUBLIC HEALTH	DROP-IN HEALTH SERVICES AT THE HUB	IA		0	3/1/2012	2/28/2013
5	Admin Support	Employment Program Supervisor	LAW FOUNDATION OF SILICON VALLEY	LACY- DROP-IN LEGAL SERVICES AT THE HUB	OA		0	2/28/2012	2/27/2013
6	Admin Support	Social Services Program Manager, III	LAW FOUNDATION OF SILICON VALLEY	LEGAL ADVOCATES FOR YOUTH (LACY)	MC	GF	127,250	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
7	Admin Support	Social Services Program Manager, III	SPHERE INSTITUTE, THE	COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT TOOL (CAT)	SA		39,500	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
8	Admin Support	Social Services Program Manager, III	Lenz-Rashid, Sonja	DFCS Needs Assessment for ILP	SA	MHD/CAPP Grant	15,000	9/26/2012	10/22/2012
9	Admin Support	Social Services Program Manager, III	FIRST 5 SANTA CLARA COUNTY	TOUCHPOINTS TRAINING-LINDA HSIAO	MOU		1,500	3/28/2011	6/30/2014
10	Admin Support	Social Services Program Manager, III	FIRST 5 SANTA CLARA COUNTY	TOUCHPOINTS TRAINING-VALERIE SOUTHARD	MOU		1,500	3/28/2011	6/30/2014
11	Admin Support	Social Services Program Manager, III	SCVHHS-MMHS	MEDICAL MOBILE HEALTH SERVICES AT THE HUB	IA		0	8/1/2012	8/31/2013
12	Admin Support	Social Services Program Manager, III	PUBLIC HEALTH	CHILD HEALTH & DISABILITY PREVENTION PROG (CHDP)	IA		0	7/1/2011	6/30/2013
13	Admin Support	Social Services Program Manager, III	BILL WILSON CENTER	Children's Abuse Treatment Services (CHAT) grant	MOU	CalEMA	0	4/1/2012	3/30/2013
14	Admin Support	Social Services Program Manager, III	EVERGREEN VALLEY COLLEGE	A TRADITION OF CARING PROGRAM	MOU		0	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
15	Admin Support	Social Services Program Manager, III	PUBLIC HEALTH	HEALTH CARE PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE	MOU		0	7/1/2011	6/30/2013
16	Admin Support	Social Services Program Manager, III	ALUM ROCK COUNSELING CENTER	TEEN PREGNANCY PREVENTION SERVICES - COLLABORATIVE	MOU	N/A	0	7/1/2011	6/30/2016
17	Admin Support	Social Work Coordinator II	FAMILY AND CHILDREN SERVICES	INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAM	MC	ILP	728,802	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
18	Admin Support	Social Work Coordinator II	SCVHHS - DADS	HOUSE ON THE HILL	IA	CWS	716,738	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
19	Admin Support	Social Work Coordinator II	BILL WILSON CENTER	THPP	MOU	THPP-CWS	458,280	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
20	Admin Support	Social Work Coordinator II	UNITY CARE GROUP, THE	THPP	MOU		412,452	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
21	Admin Support	Social Work Coordinator II	TECHNICAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT INC	SUBSTANCE ABUSE TESTING	BC	CWS Direct	325,000	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
22	Admin Support	Social Work Coordinator II	STAR PROGRAM FOR YOUTH	THPP	MOU	THPP-CWS	320,796	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
23	Admin Support	Social Work Coordinator II	LAW FOUNDATION OF SILICON VALLEY	EDUCATION RIGHTS PROJECT/PROJECT YEA!	MC	CWS Direct	80,000	7/1/2012	6/30/2013

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1	Bureau	Monitor Classification	VENDOR NAME	CONTRACT NAME	CONTRACT TYPE	Funding Source	FY13 Amount	START DATE	END DATE
24	Admin Support	Social Work Coordinator II	MORRISSEY-COMPTON	EDUCATION RIGHTS PROJECT/PROJECT YEA!	SA	CWS Direct	80,000	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
25	Admin Support	Social Work Coordinator II	CHILD ADVOCATES OF SILICON VALLEY	RECRUITMENT, TRAINING, AND SUPERVISION OF ADVOCATES FOR FOSTER CARE CHILDREN	SA	CWS	55,000	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
26	Admin Support	Social Work Coordinator II	SILICON VALLEY CHILDREN'S FUND	EMERGING SCHOLARS PROGRAM	SA		7,500	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
27	Admin Support	Social Work Coordinator II	COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS	INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAM	OA		0	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
28	Admin Support	Social Work Supervisor	BILL WILSON CENTER	THP-PLUS (HOST)	MOU	THP-PLUS-CWS	687,600	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
29	Admin Support	Social Work Supervisor	EHC LIFEBUILDERS	THP-PLUS	MOU	THP-PLUS-CWS	583,200	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
30	Admin Support	Social Work Supervisor	BILL WILSON CENTER	THP-PLUS (SS)	MOU	THP-PLUS-CWS	567,000	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
31	Admin Support	Social Work Supervisor	UNITY CARE GROUP, THE	THPPLUS	MOU		514,600	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
32	Admin Support	Social Work Supervisor	OFFICE OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE	OMBUDSPERSON	IA		195,889	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
33	Admin Support	Social Work Supervisor	LANE, MARK	GRIEVANCE REVIEW OFFICER	SA		42,000	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
34	Admin Support	Social Work Supervisor	CALIFORNIA YOUTH CONNECTION	CYC SANTA CLARA CHAPTER FUNDING	SA	ILP	9,995	8/9/2011	6/30/2013
35	Admin Support	Social Work Supervisor	BILL WILSON CENTER	HOMELESS YOUTH AND EXPLOITATION (HX) PROGRAM	MOU		0	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
36	Admin Support	Unassigned	SCVHHS - MENTAL HEALTH	EXHIBIT I: UNITY CARE GROUP, INC.	IA	GF	27,054	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
37	CANC	Social Services Program Manager, I	SMITHSON, JANE	MANDATED REPORTER TRAINING	SA	CWS	60,000	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
38	DEBS	Administrative Support Officer III	CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION	SUBSIDIZED CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES	MOU		1,955,695	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
39	DEBS	Management Analyst	TETHER INC. DBA SUBWAY #2400	CALFRESH RESTAURANT MEALS PROGRAM	MOU	CalFRESH	0	6/8/2012	6/7/2013
40	Director's Office	Assistant Director	EMQ FAMILIESFIRST	SUPPORTIVE THERAPEUTIC OPTIONS PROGRAM	MC		220,105	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
41	Director's Office	Assistant Director	GARDNER FAMILY CARE CORPORATION	SUPPORTIVE THERAPEUTIC OPTIONS PROGRAM	MC	STOP	67,099	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
42	Director's Office	Assistant Director	QUALTIERI, ANELDA	PSYCHOLOGICAL EVALUATOR	SA		41,329	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
43	Director's Office	Project Manager	JL TALLEY AND ASSOCIATES	PROJECT MANAGEMENT TRAINING	SA	SUPERIOR COURT GRANT	10,000	5/1/2012	9/30/2012
44	Director's Office	SSA/Staff Development	WEST VALLEY-MISSION COMMUNITY COLLEGE	TITLE IV-E TRAINING	BC		912,080	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
45	Director's Office	Unassigned	SCVHHS - MENTAL HEALTH	EXHIBIT D: UNITY CARE GROUP, INC.	IA	GF	41,000	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
46	Director's Office	Unassigned	SCVHHS - MENTAL HEALTH	EXHIBIT E: FY13 MEDI-CAL PRIVACY ACT	IA	GF	0	7/1/2012	6/30/2013

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1	Bureau	Monitor Classification	VENDOR NAME	CONTRACT NAME	CONTRACT TYPE	Funding Source	FY13 Amount	START DATE	END DATE
47	ER/DI	Office Management Coordinator	SUPERIOR COURT OF CA	CLERICAL/DEPENDENCY COURT RECEPTION	MOU	SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA	89,603	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
48	ER/DI	Office Management Coordinator	SUPERIOR COURT OF CA	OSIII - FAMILY COURT SERVICES	MOU	SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA	79,728	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
49	ER/DI	Social Services Program Manager, I	GARDNER FAMILY CARE CORPORATION	INTENSIVE PARENT-SKILL BUILDING SERVICES	MC	CAT AID - GROUP HOME SUBS	318,322	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
50	ER/DI	Social Services Program Manager, III	SILICON VALLEY FACES- VICTIM WITNESS (SVCCJ)	VICTIM WITNESS ADVOCACY	SA	GF	88,018	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
51	ER/DI	Social Services Program Manager, III	CITY OF SAN JOSE - POLICE DEPT.	CHILDREN'S INTERVIEW CENTER	MOU	CWS	63,826	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
52	ER/DI	Social Work Coordinator II	GARDNER FAMILY CARE CORPORATION	EXPANDED DIFFERENTIAL RESPONSE	MC	PSSF-FS PSSF-FP FIRST 5 CWSOIP GF	972,625	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
53	ER/DI	Social Work Coordinator II	GARDNER FAMILY CARE CORPORATION	FAMILY STRENGTH BASED SERVICES	MC	CAT AID - GROUP HOME SUBS	606,929	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
54	ER/DI	Social Work Coordinator II	UNITY CARE GROUP, THE	DIFFERENTIAL RESPONSE SVCS (AA FAMILIES)	MC		295,000	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
55	ER/DI	Social Work Coordinator II	LEGAL AID SOCIETY	INTENSIVE IN-HOME SERVICES (AFRICAN-AMERICAN)	BC		98,237	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
56	ER/DI	Social Work Coordinator II	SCVHHS - MENTAL HEALTH	EXHIBIT H: GARDNER FAMILY STRENGTH BASED SERVICES	IA	GF	43,071	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
57	Family & Permanency	Social Services Program Manager, III	UNITY CARE GROUP, THE	RESOURCE & ADVOCACY SUPPORT SERVICES PROGRAM	MC		399,180	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
58	Family & Permanency	Social Services Program Manager, III	CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF SANTA CLARA COUNTY	RELATIVE AND NREFM MEMBERS RESOURCE SUPPORT PROGRAM	MC	CWSOIP	298,694	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
59	Family & Permanency	Social Services Program Manager, III	CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF SANTA CLARA COUNTY	KSSP SUPPORT FOR RELATIVE AND ADOPTIVE CAREGIVERS	MC	KSSP	170,170	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
60	Family & Permanency	Social Services Program Manager, III	SANTA CLARA COUNTY FOSTER ADOPTIVE PARENT ASSOCIATION	CAPACITY BUILDING	GRANT	CAT AID - OUT OF HOME FP ASSOC. CAP BUILD.	157,000	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
61	Family & Permanency	Social Services Program Manager, III	BILL WILSON CENTER	VOLUNTEER CASE AIDE SERVICES	BC	Volunteer Services	43,833	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
62	Family & Permanency	Social Services Program Manager, III	SANTA CLARA COUNTY FOSTER ADOPTIVE PARENT ASSOCIATION	EVENT PLANNER	SA	FOSTER HOME RECRUIT	14,400	7/1/2010	6/30/2013
63	Family & Permanency	Social Services Program Manager, III	WEST VALLEY-MISSION COMMUNITY COLLEGE	PRIDE TAINING	MOU		0	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
64	Family & Permanency	Social Work Supervisor	EMQ FAMILIESFIRST	WRAPAROUND SERVICES	MOU	CALWIN	2,856,000	7/1/2012	12/31/2012
65	Family & Permanency	Social Work Supervisor	REBEKAH CHILDREN'S SERVICES	WRAPAROUND SERVICES	MOU		1,302,000	7/1/2012	6/30/2013

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1	Bureau	Monitor Classification	VENDOR NAME	CONTRACT NAME	CONTRACT TYPE	Funding Source	FY13 Amount	START DATE	END DATE
66	Family & Permanency	Social Work Supervisor	EMQ FAMILIESFIRST	WRAPAROUND SERVICES	BC	CALWIN	840,000	1/1/2013	6/30/2013
67	Family & Permanency	Social Work Supervisor	REBEKAH CHILDREN'S SERVICES	WRAPAROUND SERVICES	BC	CALWIN	840,000	1/1/2013	6/30/2013
68	Family & Permanency	Social Work Supervisor	SENECA CENTER	WRAPAROUND SERVICES	BC	CALWIN	840,000	1/1/2013	6/30/2013
69	Family & Permanency	Social Work Supervisor	STAR VIEW FAMILY AND CHILDREN SERVICES	WRAPAROUND SERVICES	BC	CALWIN	840,000	1/1/2013	6/30/2013
70	Family & Permanency	Social Work Supervisor	UNITY CARE GROUP, THE	WRAPAROUND SERVICES	BC	CALWIN	840,000	1/1/2013	6/30/2013
71	Family & Permanency	Social Work Supervisor	UNITY CARE GROUP, THE	WRAPAROUND SERVICES	MOU		840,000	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
72	Family & Permanency	Social Work Supervisor	SENECA CENTER	WRAPAROUND SERVICES	MOU		420,000	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
73	Family & Permanency	Social Work Supervisor	SCVHHS - MENTAL HEALTH	EXHIBIT A: WRAPAROUND (EMQ_RCS, UCG, SFA)	IA	GF	377,325	7/1/2012	12/31/2012
74	Family & Permanency	Social Work Supervisor	SENECA CENTER	AAP WRAPAROUND	MOU	CALWIN	374,355	7/1/2012	9/30/2012
75	Family & Permanency	Social Work Supervisor	SCVHHS - MENTAL HEALTH	EXHIBIT C: WRAPAROUND (VICTOR TREATMENT CENTER)	IA	GF	292,720	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
76	Family & Permanency	Social Work Supervisor	OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF	EXHIBIT A: INVESTIGATIN SERVICES AND HIGH RISK MONITORING	IA		180,000	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
77	Family & Permanency	Social Work Supervisor	KINSHIP CENTER	THERAPEUTIC CAMP FOR ADOPTIVE FAMILIES	BC		160,000	8/13/2012	9/30/2013
78	Family & Permanency	Social Work Supervisor	OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF	EXHIBIT B: LAW ENFORCEMENT CLERK/LAW ENFORCEMENT RECORDS TECHNICIAN	IA		105,872	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
79	Family & Permanency	Social Work Supervisor	SCVHHS - MENTAL HEALTH	EXHIBIT B: WRAPAROUND (EMQ MATRIX)	IA	GF	97,561	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
80	Family & Permanency	Social Work Supervisor	SCVHHS - MENTAL HEALTH	EXHIBIT G: SAINT VINCENT'S	IA	GF	45,000	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
81	Family & Permanency	Social Work Supervisor	SCVHHS - MENTAL HEALTH	EXHIBIT F: UNITY CARE GROUP DR SERVICES	IA	GF	5,000	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
82	Family & Permanency	Social Work Supervisor	3 ANGELS CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES	INTENSIVE TREATMENT FOSTER CARE SERVICES	MOU	CALWIN/FOSTER CARE	0	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
83	Family & Permanency	Social Work Supervisor	ABOVE THE LINE (FORMERLY HOME FOR KIDS)	INTENSIVE TREATMENT FOSTER CARE SERVICES	MOU	CALWIN/FOSTER CARE	0	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
84	Family & Permanency	Social Work Supervisor	ASPIRANET	INTENSIVE TREATMENT FOSTER CARE SERVICES	MOU	CALWIN/FOSTER CARE	0	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
85	Family & Permanency	Social Work Supervisor	BILL WILSON CENTER	INTENSIVE TREATMENT FOSTER CARE PROGRAM	MOU	CALWIN/FOSTER CARE	0	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
86	Family & Permanency	Social Work Supervisor	CATHOLIC CHARITIES CYO ST. VINCENT'S FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY	INTENSIVE TREATMENT FOSTER CARE SERVICES	MOU	CALWIN/FOSTER CARE	0	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
87	Family & Permanency	Social Work Supervisor	CREATIVE ALTERNATIVES	INTENSIVE TREATMENT FOSTER CARE SERVICES	MOU	CALWIN/FOSTER CARE	0	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
88	Family & Permanency	Social Work Supervisor	EMQ FAMILIESFIRST	INTENSIVE TREATMENT FOSTER CARE PROGRAM	MOU	CALWIN/FOSTER CARE	0	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
89	Family & Permanency	Social Work Supervisor	ENVIRONMENTAL ALTERNATIVES	INTENSIVE TREATMENT FOSTER CARE PROGRAM	MOU	CALWIN/FOSTER CARE	0	7/1/2012	6/30/2013

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1	Bureau	Monitor Classification	VENDOR NAME	CONTRACT NAME	CONTRACT TYPE	Funding Source	FY13 Amount	START DATE	END DATE
90	Family & Permanency	Social Work Supervisor	NEW FAMILIES, INC.	INTENSIVE TREATMENT FOSTER CARE SERVICES	MOU	CALWIN/FOSTER CARE	0	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
91	Family & Permanency	Social Work Supervisor	REBEKAH CHILDREN'S SERVICES	INTENSIVE TREATMENT FOSTER CARE SERVICES	MOU	CALWIN/FOSTER CARE	0	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
92	Family & Permanency	Social Work Supervisor	SIERRA VISTA CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES	INTENSIVE TREATMENT FOSTER CARE SERVICES	MOU	CALWIN/FOSTER CARE	0	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
93	Family & Permanency	Social Work Supervisor	STAR PROGRAM FOR YOUTH	INTENSIVE TREATMENT FOSTER CARE SERVICES	MOU	CALWIN/FOSTER CARE	0	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
94	Family & Permanency	Social Work Supervisor	SAN ANDREAS REGIONAL CENTER	INTAKE SERVICES TO DEPENDENT CHILDREN	MOU	N/A	0	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
95	Family & Permanency	Social Work Supervisor	V.B.R. FOUNDATION, INC.	INTENSIVE TREATMENT FOSTER CARE SERVICES	MOU	CALWIN/FOSTER CARE	0	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
96	Family & Permanency	Social Work Supervisor	SENECA CENTER	INTENSIVE TREATMENT FOSTER CARE SERVICES	MOU		0	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
97	Family Resource Center	Social Services Program Manager, III	SCVHHS - MENTAL HEALTH	FWC - STAFFING	IA	FWC SALARY FWC BENEFIT	125,233	9/30/2011	9/29/2012
98	Family Resource Center	Social Services Program Manager, III	DEPENDENCY ADVOCACY CENTER	FWC: MENTOR PARENT PROGRAM	BC	FWC Grant	120,522	9/30/2011	9/29/2012
99	Family Resource Center	Social Services Program Manager, III	SRI INTERNATIONAL	FWC: 5 YEAR EVALUATION	BC	FWC SALARY FWC TRAVEL	104,000	9/30/2011	9/29/2012
100	Family Resource Center	Social Services Program Manager, III	DOMESTIC VIOLENCE INTERVENTION COLLABORATION	DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SERVICES	BC		100,000	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
101	Family Resource Center	Social Services Program Manager, III	SUPERIOR COURT OF CA	FWC - DEPENDENCY RESOURCE COORDINATOR	BC	FWC GRANT	87,795	9/30/2011	9/29/2012
102	Family Resource Center	Social Services Program Manager, III	SCVHHS - DADS	FWC - STAFFING	IA	FWC SALARY FWC BENEFIT	56,687	9/30/2011	9/29/2012
103	Family Resource Center	Social Services Program Manager, III	EMQ FAMILIESFIRST	CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE TREATMENT PROGRAM	MC		22,800	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
104	Family Resource Center	Social Services Program Manager, III	BILL WILSON CENTER	CENTER FOR LIVING WITH DYING	BC	CWS Direct	3,000	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
105	Family Resource Center	Social Services Program Manager, III	CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF SANTA CLARA COUNTY	Kindred Souls Program	MOU		0	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
106	Family Resource Center	Social Services Program Manager, III	NEUROTICOS ANONIMOS	NA/AA MEETINGS	OA		0	2/3/2012	2/2/2013
107	Family Resource Center	Social Services Program Manager, III	SANTA CLARA COUNTY FOSTER ADOPTIVE PARENT ASSOCIATION	STORAGE	OA		0	5/5/2012	6/30/2013
108	Family Resource Center	Social Work Coordinator II	SANTA CLARA COUNTY FOSTER ADOPTIVE PARENT ASSOCIATION	CHILD SUPERVISION	BC	SFP	261,000	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
109	Family Resource Center	Social Work Coordinator II	EMQ FAMILIESFIRST	CELEBRATING FAMILIES PARENT EDUCATION PROGRAM	MC		160,000	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
110	Family Resource Center	Social Work Coordinator II	SIMILE, ERIN O.	PARENTING WITHOUT VIOLENCE PROGRAM	BC	CAT AID	97,842	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
111	Family Resource Center	Social Work Coordinator II	SIMILE, ERIN O.	PARENT EDUCATION PROGRAM	BC	SFP	78,100	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
112	Family Resource Center	Social Work Coordinator II	FAMILY AND CHILDREN SERVICES	52 WEEK BATTERERS INTERVENTION PROGRAM	BC	BATT. INTERV.	52,450	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
113	Family Resource Center	Social Work Coordinator II	BILL WILSON CENTER	PARENT-CHILD INTERACTION THERAPY	BC	SFP	30,000	7/1/2012	6/30/2013

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1	Bureau	Monitor Classification	VENDOR NAME	CONTRACT NAME	CONTRACT TYPE	Funding Source	FY13 Amount	START DATE	END DATE
114	Family Resource Center	Social Work Coordinator II	FAMILY AND CHILDREN SERVICES	PARENT EDUCATION PROGRAM	BC	SFP	30,000	7/1/2012	9/30/2012
115	Family Resource Center	Social Work Coordinator II	FAMILY AND CHILDREN SERVICES	PARENTING WITHOUT VIOLENCE PROGRAM	MC	CAT AID- OUT OF HOME CARE	22,518	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
116	Family Resource Center	Social Work Coordinator II	NEW BEGINNINGS COUNSELING AND CONSULTING	52-WEEK BATTERERS INTERVENTION PROGRAM	SA	CWS	10,000		
117	Family Resource Center	Social Work Coordinator II	WAVES	52 WEEK BATTERERS INTERVENTION PROGRAM	SA	CWS	10,000	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
118	Family Resource Center	Social Work Coordinator II	COMMUNITY PSYCHOTHERAPY INSTITUTE	52 WEEK BATTERERS INTERVENTION PROGRAM	SA	CWS	7,550	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
119	Family Resource Center	Social Work Coordinator II	HOUSING AUTHORITY	100 SECTION 8 VOUCHERS	MOU		0	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
120	Family Resource Center	Social Work Coordinator II	CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF SANTA CLARA COUNTY	Kindred Souls Program	MOU		0	11/1/2012	6/30/2013
121	Family Resource Center	Social Work Supervisor	UNITY CARE GROUP, THE	PARENT ADVOCATE PROGRAM	MC		280,198	7/1/2012	6/30/2013
122	South County	Social Services Program Manager, III	CHILD AND FAMILY POLICY INSTITUTE OF CALIFORNIA (CFPIC)	FEDERAL LINKAGES PROJECT	MOU		0	3/12/2012	3/11/2013
123	South County	Social Services Program Manager, III	NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS	NA MEETINGS	OA		0	5/11/2012	6/30/2013
124	SSA Admin	Director	JL TALLEY AND ASSOCIATES	PROJECT MANAGEMENT TRAINING	SA	SUPERIOR COURT GRANT	5,600	11/1/2012	6/30/2012
125	SSA Admin	MAPM II/III	OKOH, ALICIA	COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SPECIALIST	SA	LTFC GRANT- SALARY LTFC GRANT- TRAVEL-MILEAGE	51,000	4/17/2012	9/30/2012
126	SSA Admin	MAPM II/III	MISSION ANALYTICS GROUP, INC.	CHILDREN OF COLOR PROJECT	SA	CAPP GRANT	49,900	7/17/2012	1/15/2013
127	SSA Admin	SSA/Staff Development	PARENT-INFANT & CHILD INSTITUTE (Dr. Kristie Brandt): CAPP GRANT	PROVIDE TRAINING IN REFLECTIVE TRAINING AND FACILITATION TO DFCS STAFF	SA	CAPP GRANT	18,200	8/14/2012	12/31/2012
128							26,082,828		

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Section 7. Maximizing Federal Revenue for Foster Youth

Background

- During FY 2012-13, the County's foster care program served an average caseload of about 1,200 youth through age 24, costing about \$40.3 million. About 49 percent, or \$19.8 million, was paid by the County General Fund. In addition to basic federal foster care funding, the County may receive separate federal reimbursement for youth eligible for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and State Supplementary Payment (SSP) or Social Security Administration (SSA) survivor benefits. Any child eligible for SSI benefits is also eligible for SSP benefits. The County receives about \$579,000 in state and federal funds annually for about 99 such youth. Since 2009, State law requires foster youth between ages 16.5 to 17.5 to be screened for SSI/SSP eligibility. The County's screening has focused on these youth, although both younger and older youth and adults may also qualify.

Problem

- A single Department of Employment and Benefit Services (DEBS) employee is responsible to screen about 1,200 foster youth and apply for federal benefits on behalf of those eligible. Due to the significant workload associated with existing SSI/SSP and SSA cases, most foster youth who are potentially eligible for benefits are not evaluated. As of May 2013, there was a backlog of 152 foster youth between ages 16.5 to 17.5 awaiting screening. Of the remaining 900-plus youth below and above the 16.5 to 17.5 age group whose screening is not mandated by law, very few have been evaluated since 2010, although 15 to 20 percent should be eligible for SSI or SSA funding.

Adverse Effect

- By failing to screen all youth between 16.5 to 17.5 years of age, the County is violating State law. In addition, because an estimated 15 percent of the entire foster youth population is believed to be eligible for federal funding, the County General Fund is unnecessarily paying for their care. Furthermore, because foster youth average about 10 years of age - federal reimbursement - once established, may continue for years.

Recommendations, Savings and Benefits

- By adding one Social Work Coordinator II position at an annual General Fund cost of \$115,492 to assist with recruitment, screening and processing of SSI/SSP and SSA applications for foster care youth, the County could realize net increased federal reimbursement of General Fund foster care costs. Using the average tenure in foster care of 2.5 years, the estimated net benefit to the County, after paying for the increased staff costs, over that period is \$428,000 or \$171,000 annually. In addition, implementing this recommendation would enable the Department to complete the screenings necessary to comply with State law, and would provide more funding to foster parents.

Background on SSI/SSP/SSA

Select youth within the County's foster care system may qualify for federal Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Administration (SSA) survivor benefits. Under Title II

Section 7. Maximizing Federal Revenue for Foster Youth

of the Social Security Act, children in foster care may be eligible for survivor benefits because they are children of workers who have retired, become disabled or died. Under Title XVI of the Social Security Act, Supplemental Security Income (SSI) provides cash aid to disabled or blind youth in foster care to help pay for basic needs, including food, clothing and shelter. Any California child who qualifies for Federal SSI benefits automatically qualifies for State benefits, known as State Supplementary Payment (SSP). According to the Foster Care Eligibility Bureau of the County Social Services Agency, SSP amounts are included in the SSI amounts reported to us.

SSA survivor benefit amounts for children vary according to the disabled or deceased parent’s wages.¹ SSI/SSP benefit amounts for disabled children are fixed at \$1,122 per month per child. Both types of funds reimburse the cost of foster child care incurred by either the foster parent or by the County for a foster child’s out-of-home placement. These federal funds are either distributed to the child’s foster parent or remain within the County to reimburse the County’s portion of expense for out-of-home care. The County share of this reimbursement is particularly important because federal SSA and SSI/SSP funds can be used to offset foster care expenses that are presently being paid for by the General Fund. The County keeps about 53 percent of these funds; parents received the remaining 47 percent.

In the County of Santa Clara, since record tracking began in 2007, approximately 15 percent of all foster youth, on average, have received SSI/SSP or SSA benefits. Of the remaining 85 percent, some are not eligible, but many simply were not screened for eligibility.

Table 7.1

Percent of Foster Youth Receiving SSA or SSI/SSP Benefits

	<u>SSI/</u> <u>SSP</u>	<u>SSA</u>	<u>Total</u> <u>Active</u> <u>SSI/SSP &</u> <u>SSA Cases</u>	<u>Total</u> <u>Foster</u> <u>Care</u> <u>Count</u>	<u>SSI/SSP</u> <u>Percent</u>	<u>SSA</u> <u>Percent</u>	<u>Total</u> <u>Percent</u> <u>SSI/SSP &</u> <u>SSA</u>
FY 2007-08	76	162	238	1,695	4.5%	9.6%	14.0%
FY 2008-09	80	139	219	1,491	5.4%	9.3%	14.7%
FY 2009-10	80	136	216	1,133	7.1%	12.0%	19.1%
FY 2010-11	64	118	182	998	6.4%	11.8%	18.2%
FY 2011-12	48	106	154	1,020	4.7%	10.4%	15.1%
FY 2012-13 YTD through May	32	67	99	1,188	2.7%	5.6%	8.2%
Average	63	121	185	1,256	5.1%	9.8%	14.9%

Source: SSI/SSP/SSA Advocacy Program for Foster Children’s Monthly Fiscal Report: FY 2007-08 to FY 2012-13.

¹ In addition, there may be additional reimbursements for excessive child support benefits as well as benefits from the County’s Cash Aid Program for Immigrants (CAPI). However, payouts from either excessive child support and/or CAPI funds have been effectively zero since FY 2009-10.

Legislative Changes Have Increased the Number of Foster Youth

SSI/SSP and SSA benefits were originally intended to provide benefits for foster youth aged 0 to 18 years old, including youth placed in group homes. However, over the past decade, legislation has increased the number of potentially eligible youth and the number of required screenings by counties.

In October 2005, the California Legislature chaptered Assembly Bill (AB) No. 1331 and Assembly Bill No. 1633 into law. AB 1331 required California counties to begin screening all foster youth between 16.5 and 17.5 years of age to determine SSI eligibility. AB 1633 extended the opportunity for youth to remain in foster care to foster youth above age 18 who are pursuing a high school equivalency certificate. The laws, combined with AB 12, California Fostering Connections to Success Act,² which allows eligible 18-year-olds to remain in foster care until age 21, have significantly increased the population requiring screening for SSI/SSP and SSA eligibility. Since 2011, the number of youth has increased about 16 percent, but there has been no increase in screening staff.

SSI/SSA Benefits Management in the County of Santa Clara

Until September 2005, the Department of Family and Children's Services (DFCS) was responsible to screen and manage the cases of dependent youth who qualified for SSI or SSA benefits. According to staff, this function was transferred to the Department of Employment and Benefit Services (DEBS) to take advantage of its expertise about funding, application coding and benefits management.

Within the DEBS Foster Care Management Unit, there is one Social Work Coordinator II who is responsible for advocating on behalf of potentially eligible youth as well as providing case management and maintenance of all SSI/SSP/SSA cases within the County. This Coordinator II functions as the designated Representative Payee for youth receiving benefits, which includes many regulatory responsibilities to ensure that SSI and SSA funds are used to support a "beneficiary's current maintenance," meaning the costs of food, shelter, clothing, medical care and personal comfort items. The Coordinator manages 99 active SSI/SSP and SSA cases (as of May 31, 2013). Funding for these youth includes monies received by the County for foster care placement costs, and funds received by foster parents. Together, these funds represent \$795,000 in federal reimbursement for FY 2012-13 (through May).³ The Coordinator also serves as the primary liaison to the Agency's Financial Management Services (FMS), Social Security Administration, DFCS social workers, DEBS eligibility workers, probation officers, foster/adoptive parents, emancipating youth, Independent Living Program staff, and service providers (group home service providers, therapists, teachers, etc.).

According to the Chief Fiscal Officer of the Social Services Agency, the accounting and reconciliation activities for both of the SSI Advocacy programs (Foster Care and DEBS adults) is conducted by extra-help staff or staff on overtime. We reviewed the actual FY 2012-13

² A detailed discussion of AB 12 can be found as part of the Organizational Structure finding, found in Section 5.

³ Of this \$795,000 received in federal funds for FY 2012-13, approximately 53 percent, or \$419,000 represents the County portion of abated foster care expenses. The remaining \$376,000 is paid to foster parents.

expenditures for extra help and overtime in the relevant Financial Management Services (FMS) cost centers. These amounts totaled more than \$200,000. Having a dedicated Accountant Auditor-Appraiser to carry out the fiscal aspects of both of the Agency's SSI Advocacy programs could reduce some of this expense while also increasing SSI/SSP revenue recovery. Therefore, we do not believe there is a net cost to this staffing expense, which amounts to \$93,850 per year, including benefits. We recommend adding this position to the Accounts Receivable unit of the Agency's Financial Management Services unit.

Referral and Application Process for SSI/SSA Benefits

Referrals and Screening for SSI/SSA Eligibility

Youth are screened for program eligibility by the SSI/SSP/SSA Advocacy Program Coordinator. By State law, all foster youth between ages 16.5 – 17.5 must be screened. The DFCS social worker is responsible to evaluate a child's case file and refer a potentially eligible child to the SSI/SSP/SSA Advocacy Coordinator for screening.⁴ According to Department policy, a social worker must complete Form FC 1633A: SSI Screening Guide Section A—Disability Screening at the time of foster care intake or during the child's annual reinvestigation. This form is then forwarded to and reviewed by the child's DEBS eligibility worker, who ultimately refers the case to the Advocacy Coordinator.

Once the Advocacy Coordinator receives a referral, it takes approximately two hours to locate, compile and review relevant reports and case files to determine the likelihood of a successful SSI/SSP or SSA application. Processing referrals and screening potential applicants accounts for one-quarter to one-third of the Advocacy Coordinator's workload.

This screening process is a strategic one. The Advocacy Program Coordinator estimates that, based on past experience, approximately half of all applications filed will be denied by the Social Security Administration. On average, the process to appeal a denied application takes three years, and requires significant work in addition to numerous court hearings.

Applying for Benefits

Once the Advocacy Coordinator determines a referral has a strong likelihood for SSI eligibility, he must prepare and complete both a paper and electronic application. If all necessary paperwork is complete and accessible to the Advocacy Coordinator, the typical processing time for a single SSI/SSP or SSA application is 16 work hours.

From the start of the application process to the Social Security Administration approval, the entire process can range between four to eight months. The Social Security Administration requires at least three months for its internal processing. However, because the Administration is short-staffed, processing times have been averaging over three months.

⁴ At the time of the audit, the Department had no systematic procedure in place to ensure that all youth 16.5 years and above would be referred for SSI screening. Rather, DFCS social workers make referrals for SSI screening an ad hoc basis.

Section 7. Maximizing Federal Revenue for Foster Youth

Maintenance of Effort

While the referral and application process is extensive, the majority of the Advocacy Coordinator's workload pertains to case maintenance in his role as the designated Social Security Administration representative payee for the County's SSI and SSA youth. As of May 2013, there were 99 active SSI or SSA cases for DFCS foster youth.

The Coordinator must prioritize all work related to case maintenance for these 99 cases because any delay or error might jeopardize payment for the child's care and eligibility status. As noted above, the appeal process for denied applications consumes at least three years, which is costly both in terms of lost funding for the child and staff time to coordinate the appeal.

Use of SSI/SSP and SSA Funds

When a child is approved for either SSI/SSP or SSA funds, these funds offset a portion of the cost of care that the County otherwise covers using a mixture of County General Fund, State and/or other federal funds. Once federal SSI and SSA funds are received by the County, they are either distributed to the foster parent or used to reimburse the County's cost of foster care.

Over the past six fiscal years, SSI and SSA funds from the federal government have reimbursed nearly \$6 million of Santa Clara County foster youth costs. The \$6 million, includes \$2.5 million disbursed to the foster parent through the child's CSP for SSI/SSP or SSA reimbursement, and \$3.5 million provided to the County. On average, the County's share was approximately \$579,000 per year.

Application Backlogs and State Law Violation

Mandated SSI screening for all foster youth age 16.5 and above became law effective August 1, 2009. The SSI/SSP/SSA Advocacy Coordinator estimates 315 additional SSI/SSP referrals have been made because of the new legislation. Of the total 315 referrals, 163, or approximately 52.2 percent have been processed, creating a backlog of 152 applications as of June 2013. This backlog violates the screening mandated by AB 1331 and 1633, though there are no penalties for violations. Furthermore, not all social workers refer youth in this age range for SSI eligibility screening, and at the time of the audit, the Department had no systematic procedure in place to do so. Rather, social worker referrals for potentially eligible children are completed on an ad hoc basis.⁵ In short, the *known* backlog is 152 youth. There are almost certainly more youth who should have been referred for screening but were not.

While the Advocacy Coordinator's role has shifted exclusively to processing the referrals for youth between ages 16.5 – 17.5, there are still insufficient staff resources to process the number of incoming SSI referrals. Since 2009, the Coordinator has processed 163 referrals. Of these, he

⁵ It is our understanding that the Department, as of June 2013, was conducting an internal review to determine how to address the problem of inconsistent referral practices. The Advocacy Coordinator informed us that once he has screened and/or completed an application for a referral, this information is shared with the Department so that the Department at least has a record that can be used to verify whether or not a referral has been made.

Section 7. Maximizing Federal Revenue for Foster Youth

filed applications on behalf of 47 youth, or approximately 29 percent. The Coordinator also screened but did not file applications for 116 youth, or 71 percent.

Screening older youth complies with the law, and helps to secure financial resources for youth once they emancipate from the child welfare system, which has far-reaching benefits to the youth and to the County. However, in terms of direct benefit, the County receives only a fraction of the reimbursement while the child remains under the County's guardianship – specifically during the short period of time when the youth remains a dependent until the youth emancipates from the system.

Applications for Foster Youth 0-15 Not Processed

Except in rare circumstances, since the AB 1331 and 1633 legislation became effective in 2009, the Department has not filed applications for youth under 16. Failure to allocate resources to screen younger youth for federal benefits directly costs the County money. The three-year average age of the County's foster youth is less than ten years old. Hundreds of foster youth are five years old or younger. Many of these children may receive foster services for many years.

For example, of the foster care caseload at the time of this audit, at least 151 youth had been in foster care for more than five years. Of those, three youth had been in foster care for 18 years.

Although the average length of time in care is about 2.5 years, the average eligible child is 10 years old. Therefore, the *potential* reimbursement period from the SSA/SSI/SSP funds is up to 11 years (to age 21) on average.

Lost Revenue to the County

The Coordinator estimates that under ideal circumstances, the screening takes two hours, and the application process takes 16 hours, for a total of 18 hours per potential applicant.

At the time this audit was conducted, only a very small fraction of the caseload had been screened for potential federal eligibility. That is, of the roughly 1,200 cases, about 1,000 youth have not been screened.

We estimate that screening 250 youth and processing the resulting applications for the approximately 29 percent for whom applications are most promising would take one full-time person a year to complete, as shown in Table 7.2. At the end of that year, an estimated 38 youth would eventually receive benefits.

Table 7.2

**Estimated Time to Screen 250 Youth
for Potential SSA/SSI/SSP Benefits**

	Screening	Application	Beneficiaries
Hours per Youth	2	16	N/A
Number of youth	250	73	38
Total Hours	500	1,168	1,668

Source: Department Estimates

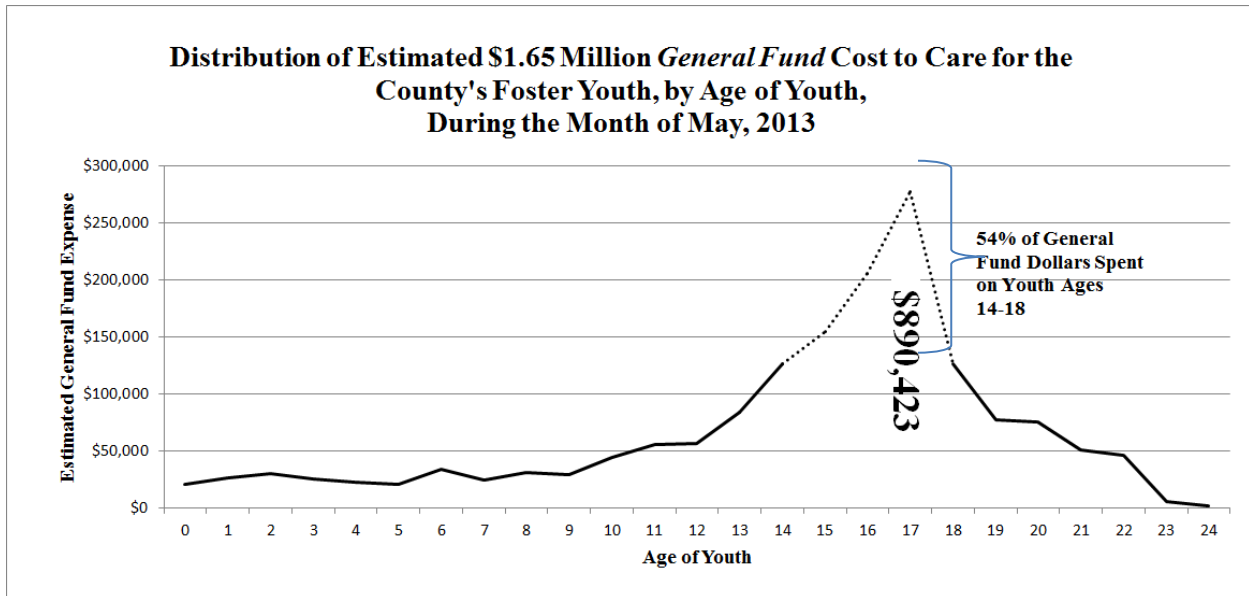
The estimated cost to the County to ultimately generate 38 beneficiaries is therefore about one FTE Social Work Coordinator II, at a gross cost of about \$134,000 per year. However, the County receives unrelated reimbursement for each such position, resulting in a net annual cost of about \$115,000 per Social Work Coordinator II.

Of the 38 eligible youth, about 26 are estimated to be eligible to receive SSA benefits, at an estimated rate of \$6,818 each per year. The remaining 12 youth are estimated to be eligible for \$10,569 each per year in SSI/SSP benefits. Based on the average child’s tenure in foster care, we estimate that these benefits would continue for 2.5 years. The County receives 53 percent of these dollars; the remaining 47 percent goes directly to foster parents. We estimate that the net benefit to the County over this 2.5 year period, after deducting the cost of the recommended staff to carry out the screenings and applications and after sharing the revenue with foster parents, would be a little more than \$428,000. In addition, the County would comply with the law regarding screening of older youth.

For all of these reasons, we recommend hiring one Social Work Coordinator II to screen as many youth as possible and make applications for SSA and SSI benefits where appropriate. We also recommend that the Department reevaluate the program and staffing needs 18 months after the date of hiring an additional staff person to verify that the value has been realized, and to determine whether additional staffing would be cost effective

If the Board of Supervisors approves a new position for this purpose, the position should focus first on clearing the backlog of legally mandated screenings. The position should then focus on screening teenaged youth, beginning around 13 or 14. At present, most of the County’s General Fund spending occurs for youth aged 14 to 18. Chart 7.1 shows the outlay of General Fund dollars by age of foster youth in the month of May 2013.

Chart 7.1



Source: Department Report of Issuances by Aid Code and Age of Youth, May 2013

As the chart shows, 54 percent of General Fund spending occurs for youth aged 14 to 18, peaking at 17. Screening youth in their early teens would help to reduce the volume of unreimbursed General Fund outlay that is occurring for youth in their late teens.

CONCLUSION

Due to a lack of staff to screen eligible foster youth for federal programs that would provide for their care, the County is instead funding that care itself with General Fund dollars. A select number of these youth are required by state law to be screened for federal programs, and the County is out of compliance with that requirement. We estimate that there are at least 150 foster youth whose care is currently paid for by the County but who would qualify for federal reimbursement through SSI/SSP or SSA if the County hired staff to screen most of the foster population and to process applications for those youth who are in fact eligible. Assuming the program continued over the entire average tenure of foster care, the average annual benefit is estimated to be \$171,000.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Department of Employment and Benefit Services (DEBS) should:

- 7.1 Add one full-time Social Work Coordinator II to carry out legally mandated screenings for federally funded programs and to screen and apply for other youth whose eligibility for funding would reduce the General Fund expenditures for the care of foster children. (Priority 1)

Section 7. Maximizing Federal Revenue for Foster Youth

7.2 Track the outcomes following implementation of Recommendation 7.1 in terms of the volume of youth screened, the effect on the backlog of legally mandated screenings, the number of new youth determined to be eligible for federal funding, the amounts and types of revenues received. Eighteen months from the date of hiring the additional Social Work Coordinator II, the Department should use this information for the purpose of determining whether the program and staffing should be expanded. (Priority 1)

The Social Services Agency's Accounts Receivable Unit should:

7.3 Add one Accountant Auditor-Appraiser to perform the required accounting and financial management duties for SSI Advocacy Foster Care and SSI Advocacy for adults in DEBS. (Priority 2)

SAVINGS, BENEFITS AND COSTS

Hiring one Social Work Coordinator II to screen approximately 250 youth and process the resulting applications for the approximately 29 percent for whom applications are most promising would generate about 38 youth who would receive benefits. We estimate that the net benefit of continuing the program for at least 2.5 years, which is the average tenure of a child in foster care, would be about \$428,000, or \$171,000 per year. This estimate is net of the cost to provide staff to carry out the recommended screenings, which is estimated to cost the General Fund \$115,000, after accounting for federal reimbursement for the position. This estimated benefit to the County is also net of the amount of the reimbursement that would go directly to foster parents, which is estimated at \$141,000 per year. The recommended Accountant Auditor-Appraiser would serve to ensure adequate financial management of the SSI Advocacy programs, which now are managed by extra help staff, and through use of overtime. Overtime expenses in FMS amount to more than \$200,000 per year. We believe that by hiring adequate fiscal staff, the Agency would be able to reduce its overtime and extra help costs associated with both of the SSI Advocacy programs, while also ensuring better management of those programs. As a result, we believe that the cost of the additional staff will be neutral as a result of overtime reduction and improved revenue.

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County of Santa Clara

Social Services Agency



333 West Julian Street
San Jose, California 95110-2335

DATE: October 3, 2013
TO: Management Audit Division
FROM: Lori A. Medina, MSW
DFCS Director

SUBJECT: **Social Services Agency Response to Draft Audit Report of DFCS**

This memo is submitted in response to the Management Audit Division's Draft Management Audit of the County of Santa Clara's Social Services Agency's Department of Family and Children's Services.

We appreciate the time and work that has gone into developing this report. The following are our responses:

Section 1. Improving the County's Responsiveness to Reported Child Abuse & Neglect

1.1 Fill and assign seven vacant Social Worker III positions and one vacant Social Work Supervisor to the Child Abuse and Neglect Center. (Priority 1)

Response: Partially Agree. Moving vacant positions from one area to another area where a need still exists creates additional staffing difficulty. Implementing this recommendation will require adding 7 Social Worker III positions and 1 Social Work Supervisor Position.

1.2 The Department should issue monthly management reports to the County Executive and Board of Supervisors to monitor the response rate at the CAN Reporting Center and service delivery in other bureaus. The response rate and reports should also include calls from law enforcement, most of which are currently not tracked, tabulated or reported. (Priority 1)

Response: Partially Agree. Reports from Law Enforcement are tracked separately, and should be captured with all reporting data.

1.3 Optimize staffing schedules, through a meet and confer process, by hour of the day and day of the week so that there is sufficient staffing to meet work demand and reduce abandoned calls. (Priority 1)

Response: Partially Agree. Adding another unit will allow greater flexibility to recruit into the added vacant positions at times that best meet business need.

- 1.4** Direct the County Counsel to draft language to be introduced by the County's State representatives in the Legislature, which would establish a Statewide mandate for counties to regularly report to the California Department of Social Services the number of calls received and responded to by each county's child abuse hotline.

Response: Partially Agree. SSA/DFCS will consult with the County Welfare Directors Association about how best to address this issue, in consultation with County Counsel.

Section 2. Improving Emergency Response Caseload Standards and Scheduling

- 2.1** Adjust swing shift hours for Emergency Response Division staff to 12 p.m.-9 p.m., from the current 1 p.m.-10 p.m., with a further adjustment to an 11 a.m. start considered if the CAN call center recommendations in Section 1 are successful. (Priority 2)

Response: Disagree. Changing the start time of the shift will not have the desired effect of reducing overtime, because cases needing assignment will just revert to the After Hours Program an hour earlier, still resulting in overtime.

- 2.2** Through the meet-and-confer process provided in the current union contract, seek a higher caseload standard than the current 14 cases per Emergency Response social worker per month. (Priority 1)

Response: Disagree. Emergency Response is a critical area requiring adequate time for social workers to conduct appropriate assessments in a timely manner. DFCS intends to add positions to the Emergency Response Section in the next fiscal year, which should minimize the need for overtime.

Section 3. Court Intervention Caseloads and Staffing

- 3.1** Reassign five of the seven staff now assigned to oversee informal supervision cases within the Dependency Investigations Division to receive cases requiring court intervention. Two Dependency Investigations staff who oversee informal supervision cases for Spanish-speaking clients would continue to do so, but would be transferred to Continuing Service Bureaus B or C. (Priority 1)

Response: Partially Agree. DFCS agrees with reassigning five of the existing Informal Supervision Staff to Dependency Investigations. The remaining two positions should be prioritized for Emergency Response.

- 3.2** Reassign the informal supervision caseloads of the five positions discussed in Recommendation 4.1 to staff in the Continuing Services Bureaus B or C, which have capacity to accept additional informal supervision cases. (Priority 1)

Response: Agree

- 3.3** In conjunction with the Employment Service Agency and Social Service Agency Human Resource Division, conduct a study to determine the causes of the high turnover among the Social Worker III positions that handle court cases in the Dependency Investigations Bureau, explore options for addressing these and report back to the Board of Supervisors. (Priority 2)

Response: Agree

Section 4. Receiving, Assessment and Intake Center (RAIC)

- 4.1** Consolidate the placement and recruitment functions from the Family and Permanency Bureau (FPB) with RAIC into a new bureau, Receiving, Recruitment and Placement, to ensure sufficient placement resources are available to help place children taken away from parents in safe and suitable homes. (Priority 1)

Response: **Partially Agree.** The Joint Decision Making Unit should remain at the Family Resource Center with the Prevention and Permanency Bureau referenced in Section 5 to better engage community and community partners in decision making meetings.

- 4.2** Standardize training and the reporting mechanism used to record entry and exit data for youth admitted to the RAIC, which specifically highlights youth remaining at the Center over 24 hours, to ensure the Department has accurate statistical information on RAIC operations and can conduct substantive analysis of RAIC operations. (Priority 3)

Response: Agree

- 4.3** During the FY 2014-15 budget process, delete 17 Counselor positions (including two Senior Counselor positions) and add 11 Social Worker I positions to staff the RAIC, effective July 1, 2014, to realize a savings of \$547,042. (Priority 1)

Response: **Partially Agree.** All 17 positions should be reclassified, enabling expanded supportive functions for case carrying social workers.

OR

- 4.4** Issue a Request for Proposals to identify an organization to operate the child care, intake, and receiving functions of the Receiving Center on a contract basis, and conduct a meet and-confer process with relevant union representatives. (Priority 1)

Response: DFCS is currently engaged in Stakeholder discussion regarding the future Receiving Center location and functions. Although this recommendation has been proposed by others through the Stakeholder process, the option needs further evaluation.

Section 5. Organizational Structure

- 5.1** Restructure the Front-End Bureau so that Emergency Response and the Child Abuse and Neglect (CAN) Reporting Center, which are related functions, are supervised by one Social Services Program Manager III, and Court Intervention Services (Dependency Investigations or DI) are supervised by a second SSPM III. (Priority 1)

Response: Partially Agree. DFCS is moving toward separating the Emergency Response and Dependency Investigation Bureau between two SSPM III's. CANC should remain separate, under the current SSPM I, to maintain independence and program integrity from Emergency Response assignments.

- 5.2** Issue a special monthly report to the County Executive and Board of Supervisors reporting: (a) calls answered, received, and abandoned at the CAN Reporting Center, including calls from law enforcement, most of which are not tracked or reported; (b) referrals to Emergency Response; (c) removal of children from homes and intakes at the Receiving, Assessment and Intake Center; (d) actual petitions filed in the Superior Court; and (e) instances in which the Court agreed to keep children in protective custody, in order to access service delivery throughout the continuum of front-end child welfare services.

Response: Agree

- 5.3** Centralize the reporting of South County staff with bureaus based in San Jose to provide flexibility for evenly distributing caseloads and improve consistency in casework among comparable Social Workers. Transfer the vacant SSPM III code assigned to manage the South County Bureau to manage Dependency Investigations, along with the Administrative Assistant that supports the SSPM III. The vacant Administrative Assistant code in DI should be deleted to consolidate administrative functions. (Priority 1)

Response: Disagree. South County operations need onsite management to engage with staff and community. DFCS will delete a vacant SSPM I position to add the second SSPM III position for Dependency Investigation. All program components to the South County Bureau should remain intact.

- 5.4** Delete the vacant SSPM I code assigned to DI, shift the SSPM I code for ER to the Receiving, Assessment and Intake Center (RAIC), retain the SSPM I code for CAN Reporting Center, and delete the SSPM I codes in the Continuing Service Bureaus through attrition so that SSPM Is perform the oversight of small to medium programs, as described in the descriptions for this position classification. (Priority 2)

Response: Partially Agree. DFCS disagrees with the recommendation of moving the South County SSPM III position to DI, thereby leaving the South County Bureau without an onsite manager. The South County Bureau, although small, has added complexity because of the number of programs (ER, Continuing, and a FRC). South County also has challenges around adequate resources and requires a management structure that maintains

connection with the community and community based services.

DFCS plans to delete the vacant SSPM I position to create a SSPM III position for Dependency Investigation. The vacant PM I position at the RAIC was already deleted to create the SSPM I needed to manage RAIC, thereby eliminating the need to shift the SSPM I position from ER to RAIC.

DFCS also disagrees with the recommendation to delete the remaining SSPM I's through attrition. Instead, DFCS has need for Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement oversight and management of the Law Enforcement Liaison Coordination/After-hours Program, currently managed by the SSPM I over ER. Furthermore, additional coordination around reporting requirements recommended in 5.2 should be integrated into these responsibilities for the SSPM I function.

- 5.5** Shift case carrying social workers with Non-Minor Dependent cases in the Administrative Support Bureau (ASB) to a Continuing Service Bureau to create flexibility for handling the projected caseload and have the SSPM III in the ASB focus only on administrative functions. (Priority 2)

Response: Agree.

- 5.6** In concert with the creation of the Receiving, Recruitment and Placement Bureau recommended in Section 4, consolidate prevention and permanency services into a new Prevention and Permanency bureau to concentrate expertise on what factors promote family stability both before and after entering the child welfare system. Promote the SSPM II classification overseeing Receiving, Recruitment and Placement to an SSPM III position, to better align the job classification with its responsibilities, which include managing mandated services and overseeing \$12.3 million in contracted services. Delete the vacant Social Services Program Manager I position now overseeing RAIC, which would no longer be needed. (Priority 2)

Response: Partially Agree. DFCS agrees with the recommendation to promote the SSPM II position to a SSPM III to manage the recommended Receiving, Recruitment and Placement Bureau.

DFCS disagrees with deleting the current SSPM I position at the RAIC, as referenced in response to recommendation 5.4.

The Social Worker I Unit should remain in South County to support South County Social Worker III's. The Social Work Coordinator II is currently in the process of transitioning to Service Bureau B, as the majority of assignments relate to Dependency Wellness Court.

DFCS disagrees with assigning South County clerical to report to the Administrative Support Bureau.

DFCS disagrees with moving South County Social Worker I's to the Family Resource

Center.

- 5.7** Reorganize office professional staff to better align resources with the functions of the proposed DFCS organizational structure. (Priority 2)

Response: Partially Agree. DFCS disagrees with the proposal to centralize South County staff, but accepts recommendations regarding support for the newly created bureaus recommended in the audit.

- 5.8** During the FY 2014-15 budget process, delete 17 Children's Counselor positions, (including two Senior Counselor positions) and add 11 Social Worker I positions to staff the RAIC effective July 1, 2014 to realize a savings of \$547,042 have capacity. (Priority 1)

Response: Partially Agree. As noted in the Auditor's report, DFCS previously deleted nearly half of the Social Worker I's departmentally through budget reductions in the last few years. DFCS would recommend converting the current 17 Counselor positions to 17 Social Worker I position which would allow for more support to case carrying Social Workers I positions in the field around the placement of children and provision of services, when children are not at the RAIC facility.

Section 6. Contracts Monitoring and Management

- 6.1** Create a new Contracts Project Manager position in the Administrative Services Bureau, with specific responsibility to manage contract oversight, with the various contract monitors in the department reporting to this position for contract reporting purposes. (Priority 2)

Response: Agree.

- 6.2** Direct the Project Manager to maintain and regularly update a master list of DFCS contracts, including, but not limited to, designated DFCS and OCM monitors for each contract, contract start and end dates, who receives contractor invoices for each contract, and performance reporting dates and requirements for each contractor. (Priority 2)

Response: Agree.

- 6.3** Direct the Project Manager to create a comprehensive description of duties, a resource manual of procedures, and an introductory training program, for DFCS contract program monitors. The procedures and training should include, in concert with OCM, a standardized written invoice review procedure for program monitors. (Priority 3)

Response: Agree.

- 6.4** Direct the Project Manager to assess and balance contract monitoring workload among program monitors, in conjunction with their other Department responsibilities. (Priority 3)

Response: Agree.

- 6.5** Direct the Project Manager to develop high-level management information on contractor performance for presentation to Department and Agency management. (Priority 2)

Response: Agree.

- 6.6** Direct the Project Manager to pursue strategic planning in the contracting process, working with Bureau managers and relevant program staff as key categories of contracts are due for renewal, to determine if changes in contracted services are needed. (Priority 2)

Response: Agree.

Section 7. Maximizing Federal Revenue for Foster Youth

The Department of Employment and Benefit Services (DEBS) should:

- 7.1** Add one full-time Social Work Coordinator II to carry out legally mandated screenings for federally funded programs and to screen and apply for other youth whose eligibility for funding would reduce the General Fund expenditures for the care of foster children. (Priority 1)

Response: Agree.

- 7.2** Track the outcomes following implementation of Recommendation 7.1 in terms of the volume of youth screened, the effect on the backlog of legally mandated screenings, the number of new youth determined to be eligible for federal funding, the amounts and types of revenues received. Eighteen months from the date of hiring the additional Social Work Coordinator II, the Department should use this information for the purpose of determining whether the program and staffing should be expanded. (Priority 1)

Response: Agree.

The Social Services Agency's Accounts Receivable Unit should:

- 7.3** Add one Accountant Auditor-Appraiser to perform the required accounting and financial management duties for SSI Advocacy Foster Care and SSI Advocacy for adults in DEBS. (Priority 2)

Response: Agree.