



## TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES

COMMISSIONER  
Carey D. Cockerell

April 1, 2008

The Honorable Rick Perry  
Governor of Texas  
P.O. Box 12428  
Austin, Texas 78711

The Honorable Steve Ogden  
Chairman Senate Finance Committee  
Texas Senate  
P.O. Box 12068  
Capitol Station  
Austin, Texas 78711-2068

The Honorable Warren Chisum  
Chairman House Committee on Appropriations  
Texas House of Representatives  
P.O. Box 2910  
Austin, Texas 78768-2910

Mr. John O'Brien, Director  
Texas Legislative Budget Board  
P.O. Box 12666  
Austin, Texas 78711-2666

Dear Sirs:

Retaining workers remains an ongoing challenge for the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) due to the nature and volume of the work—protecting children, the elderly, and people with disabilities from abuse, neglect, and exploitation. Staff retention is critical to improving service delivery and to minimizing the impact of staff turnover. Though DFPS received a significant number of additional staff over the 2006-2007 biennium, both Adult Protective Services (APS) and Child Protective Services (CPS) continue to experience higher than desired caseworker turnover.

Pursuant to Rider 13, House Bill 1, 80<sup>th</sup> Regular Legislative Session, DFPS is directed to develop a Human Resources Management Plan designed to improve employee morale and retention. The plan must focus on reducing employee turnover through better management. Per the requirements of Rider 13, we respectfully submit the mid-year update to the agency's Human Resources Management Plan.

The overall DFPS turnover rate decreased from 21.2% in FY 2007 to an annualized average of 19.7% as of the second quarter FY 2008. Though there has been a decrease in turnover for the agency during the first part of FY 2008, the turnover trend in past years would indicate that the next two quarters of the fiscal year will be a time when DFPS typically has its highest turnover.

The DFPS goal is to employ highly motivated, diverse, ethical, well-trained and professional staff who are committed to the agency's mission and well-prepared to produce successful outcomes. The DFPS organization will demonstrate its commitment to retain employees through the implementation of proactive strategies, policies, procedures and practices that:

- Manage workloads;
- Value employees;
- Promote employee communication and input;
- Strengthen supervision;
- Improve hiring practices; and
- Enhance the work environment.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this information.

Sincerely,

Carey D. Cockerell  
Commissioner

Enclosure

cc: Mike Morrissey, Governor's Office  
Kristi Jordan, Governor's Office  
Sarah Hicks, Senate Finance Committee Director  
Julie Haeber, Senate Finance Committee  
Amy Peterson, House Appropriations Committee Clerk  
Janice Elhert, House Appropriations Committee  
Nancy Millard, Legislative Budget Board

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**Rider 13 – Human Resources  
Management Plan  
- Mid-Year Update -**

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A Report from  
The Texas Department of Family and  
Protective Services

**April 1, 2008**

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## **Introduction**

Senate Bill 1, Rider 15, from the 79<sup>th</sup> Regular Legislative Session and currently, House Bill 1, Rider 13, from the 80<sup>th</sup> Regular Legislative Session, direct the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) to develop a Human Resources Management Plan designed to improve employee morale and retention. The plan must focus on reducing employee turnover through better management. The effectiveness of the agency's plan shall be measured by whether there is a reduction in annual employee turnover rates at the agency, specifically by the reduction in the turnover rates for caseworkers.

The past two legislative sessions have ushered in an era of tremendous change and reform for the agency. Recognizing that the provision of effective client services is heavily dependent on a trained and dedicated workforce, many of the reforms are directed at attracting and retaining high quality staff in the department's Child Protective Services (CPS) program, as well as in the other two large programs, Adult Protective Services (APS) and Child Care Licensing (CCL). The Human Resources Management Plans reflect both the investment in retention and employee morale as a result of reform efforts and the continuing challenges DFPS experiences in attempting to reduce turnover.

In an effort to review the progress of the FY 2008 Human Resources Management Plan since the October 2007 Rider 13 report that laid it out, this mid-year update includes the following:

- Overview of DFPS Workforce Support and Retention Initiative
- FY 2008 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Turnover Highlights
- Appendix: Turnover and HR-Related Data for FY 2007 and FY 2008 Second Quarter (annualized)

## **Overview of DFPS Workforce Support and Retention Initiative (WSRI)**

The DFPS Workforce Support and Retention Initiative (WSRI) is a direct result of the FY 2008 Human Resources Management Plan and an attempt to bring together all retention and recruitment efforts into one initiative. This initiative is designed to be a comprehensive effort to capitalize on activities occurring in different areas and programs around the state and to allow for ongoing high-level attention from executive staff.

The DFPS goal is to employ highly motivated, diverse, ethical, well-trained and professional staff who are committed to the agency's mission and well-prepared to produce successful outcomes. The DFPS organization will demonstrate its commitment to retain employees through the implementation of proactive strategies, policies, procedures and practices that:

1. **Manage workloads:** Systematically analyze practices and make recommendations that will increase the efficiency of frontline workers, thus reducing workloads and turnover, while improving outcomes for children and families. With the assistance provided through CPS Reform Continued, reduce CPS caseloads by reducing the number of children who enter the foster care system, and continue the progress made from the APS Caseload Management Reduction Plan.

2. **Value employees:** Support an organizational culture where good performance by employees is recognized and the opinions of dedicated employees are appreciated. Recognize that many other factors that contribute to job satisfaction and retention are not as directly related to money and are within the control of the employer. Utilize plans and strategies related to employee wellness, work/life balance and increasing our employees' sense of connection with the agency.
3. **Promote employee communication and input:** Centrally gather employee information, with a primary area of focus on issues relating to workforce support and retention. Vet information and seek a resolution or response from the appropriate source. Work to ensure all of the relevant divisions are consulted when issues cross more than one division of the agency. Share information with DFPS staff using the most appropriate communication tool (e.g., DFPS Delivers, Commissioner's Q&A, Broadcast message, cascading communication).
4. **Strengthen supervision:** Better equip agency supervisors/managers/leaders to perform their job duties and support their staff by strengthening their understanding of leadership and retention and adding "peer trainer" positions.
5. **Enhance the work environment:** Explore ways to improve the work environment for staff, by addressing issues related to office space, worker safety, automation needs and innovations, and flexible work schedules.
6. **Improve hiring practices:** Provide a comprehensive approach to improving hiring by identifying and/or developing policies, procedures and best practices that will help the agency locate, recruit and hire applicants that have an aptitude for direct delivery work and are capable of providing the highest level of service to DFPS clients.
7. **Region 8 Retention Pilot:** Serve as an incubator for ideas and innovations that support retention of staff. Serve as a place where identified recommendations can be tried and evaluated so that successful ideas are disseminated to the rest of the state.

### **Initiative 1. Manage Workloads**

**Objective: Systematically analyze practices and make recommendations that will increase the efficiency of frontline workers, thus reducing workloads and turnover, while improving outcomes for children and families. With the assistance provided through CPS Reform Continued, reduce CPS caseloads by reducing the number of children who enter the foster care system, and continue the progress made from the APS Caseload Management Reduction Plan.**

A. **APS Caseload Reduction Plan** - Section 2.18 of Senate Bill 6, 79<sup>th</sup> Regular Session, directs the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to develop, subject to the availability of funds, a caseload management reduction plan to reduce, not later than January 1, 2011, caseloads for APS workers to a level that does not exceed professional caseload standards by more than five cases per caseworker. The first plan was completed on December 31, 2006. Reasonable caseloads promote quality casework with positive outcomes and assist in the retention of staff. The plan outlines an average daily caseload per caseworker of 39.2 at the end of FY 2009. As of June 2007, the year-to-date average daily caseload for APS In-Home Services was 37.5. The successful reduction of caseloads is due to several factors: the intake growth for FY 2007 was less than projected; regional staff have focused their efforts on

reducing the duration of pending cases; and a high percentage of the additional staff that were allocated in the beginning of FY 2007 have completed training and are now able to maintain a full workload. An update to the 2006 Caseload Reduction Plan will be completed in December 2008 and efforts to balance reasonable caseloads will continue.

**Status: Ongoing**

As of January 2008, the fiscal year-to-date average daily caseload for APS In-Home Services was 31.6. This continues the improvements achieved in FY 2007. Intake volume for FY 2008 compared to corresponding months in FY 2007 has increased by 10.6%. This has not adversely impacted average daily caseloads yet.

**B. CPS Caseloads** - As part of CPS Reform Continued, reflected in the budget and SB 758, the Legislature allocated additional staff and funding to reduce Family Based Safety Services and Substitute Care caseloads. CPS Reform Continued also targets conservatorship caseload reduction through the use of:

- Family Group Decision Making during investigations and after removal;
- The funding and services provided through the new Enhanced In-Home Support Program that assists children and families in child neglect cases where poverty is a significant factor;
- More workers and support services for kinship care; and
- Additional purchased services to keep children safe in their homes or reunite families faster.

These aspects of the CPS Improvement Plan in SB 758 should result in fewer children entering foster care and shorter stays for children in foster care, bringing down caseloads.

**Status: Ongoing**

Both Family Group Decision Making and the Enhanced In-Home Support Program have been established and clients are currently being served. The emphasis in the In-Home Support Program is on cases where removals may be avoided, but since the program targets neglect and poverty, eligibility requirements have been geared to serve the neediest families. This program combines intensive in-home services with limited financial assistance. Specialized caseworkers deliver the services in 15 counties as part of the pilot. The evaluation period is expected to last until August 2009.

**C. Strengthening Residential Child Care Licensing** - The 80<sup>th</sup> Legislature also gave the Residential Child Care Licensing (RCCL) program additional resources, including 84 new staff. RCCL will create a performance management division with case analysts who will focus on the performance of Licensing workers, and risk analysts who will concentrate on the performance of facilities and child-placing agencies. A new investigations unit and Division Administrator of Investigations will oversee investigations policy and support caseworkers in their investigations of all residential child-care facilities and child-placing agencies. The addition of these staff should provide significant support to RCCL caseworkers in managing their investigations and caseloads.

**Status: In progress**

Licensing has developed and implemented policies for Enforcement Team Meetings, Team Inspections, non abuse/neglect investigations in foster homes involving children under the age of six and expanded foster home inspections. Internal workgroups have been held and policies and procedures drafted for both the Investigations Division and the Performance Management Division. The division administrators for the Performance Management and Investigation divisions have been hired and the hiring of the Lead Analysts is in process. Licensing has developed policies and procedures to implement all parts of Reform that do not require rule development. These new policies and procedures have been communicated to RCCL field staff and to residential providers. These policies and procedures also include Child Placing Agency reporting of closed foster homes and local law enforcement checks of prospective foster homes that indicate a history of domestic violence. RCCL has posted all new positions, reorganized its units into functional units, and hired almost all additional positions.

**D. Job and Task Analysis** - Historically, the results of a job and task analysis have been used for a wide variety of training and many HR-related functions such as job restructuring, salary determination, and employee retention through improved hiring criteria and ensuring that new employees have the necessary skills for job performance. A job and task analysis involves analysts observing jobholders as they accomplish their job tasks. Each step, or action, of the job is noted and described in detail. The analysis includes gathering information on the tools the jobholder needs to be successful, the conditions of task performance, the knowledge and skills necessary for performing all critical tasks, and the standards for successful task performance. For DFPS, the completed job and task analysis will permit DFPS' Center for Policy and Innovation curriculum developers to design training that develops specific knowledge, skills and abilities to match job and performance expectations. Once training is developed consistent with the analysis, the agency will be able to state with defensible certainty that the quality and consistency of training for caseworkers has been improved and the graduates of the training program will have the requisite skills, knowledge, and abilities to do their jobs.

**Status: In progress**

This project is in its final completion phase. Presently the results are being used for a number of training and HR-related projects such as: redesigning the Basic Skills Development (BSD) course for new caseworkers, identifying additional training and further skill development needs of existing staff, conducting workload management efforts, identifying potential job restructuring and other work-related issues to improve employee performance and increase retention, and redefining entry level abilities necessary for potential new employees in order to improve hiring practices. The new CPS BSD training is planned to roll out in late Fall. DFPS is also planning to procure a job and task analysis for Statewide Intake positions the summer 2008 and potentially Adult Protective Services in FY 2009 pending funding availability.

**Initiative 2. Value Employees**

**Objective: Support an organizational culture where good performance by employees is recognized and the opinions of dedicated employees are appreciated. Recognize that many other factors that contribute to job satisfaction and retention are not as directly related to money and are within the control of the employer. Utilize plans and strategies related to**

**employee wellness, work/life balance and increasing our employees' sense of connection with the agency.**

A. **Use Performance Management to Identify Outstanding Employees** - The Performance Management Initiative worked with the various programs and divisions to develop performance measures and tools for tracking progress. During FY 2008 DFPS expects to complete the implementations of performance management systems for Licensing, Purchased Client Services, Contract Oversight and Support, the Human Resources Customer Interface, Statewide Intake, the Center for Policy and Innovation, and the Office of General Counsel. Additionally in FY 2008, DFPS will begin working with Management Reporting and Statistics, Finance, Information Resources, Program Support, the Center for Program Coordination, and the Center for Consumer and External Affairs on their performance management systems.

**Status: In progress**

Thus far in FY 2008, DFPS completed implementing performance management systems for Contract Oversight and Support, the Human Resources Customer Interface, and the Center for Policy and Innovation. This initiative will continue implementing performance management systems through FY 2008. Performance management will assist in establishing consistent performance expectations for all positions, describing what “good” performance entails, and identifying and recognizing good performance.

**Initiative 3: Promote Employee Communication and Input**

**Objective: Centrally gather employee information, with a primary area of focus on issues relating to workforce support and retention. Vet information and seek a resolution or response from the appropriate source. Work to ensure all of the relevant divisions are consulted when issues cross more than one division of the agency. Share information with DFPS staff using the most appropriate communication tool (e.g., DFPS Delivers, Commissioner's Q&A, Broadcast message, cascading communication).**

A. **Continuation of Program Improvement Committees (PICs)** - The purposes of the PIC project are to ensure at least one program improvement committee for every program exists in every regional office within DFPS, and to establish an agency-wide escalation/communication process for ideas and issues that cannot be resolved at a local level. Once the committees and communication structures are in place and functional, each staff member of DFPS can expect to have an avenue to articulate their concerns and suggestions, have their issues escalated to the appropriate resolution level in the agency, and have a method of tracking their issues until a conclusion is reached. All DFPS programs have fully implemented their local office PIC structures. Agency-wide escalation processes and PICs were scheduled for full implementation by November 2007. During FY 2008, DFPS will continue refining their PIC processes by incorporating improvements solicited from agency staff and measuring the timeliness/effectiveness of how ideas/issues brought forth to PICs are resolved.



**Status: Ongoing**

DFPS implemented all regional, statewide and agency level PIC groups and escalation processes by November 2007. Since that time, DFPS has tracked a number of escalated issues and suggestions to resolution, including topics regarding travel and human resources. The remainder of FY 2008 will focus on measuring the impact and effectiveness PIC structures have on staff and the agency, and strengthening areas where necessary.

- B. **Employee Intranet** - DFPS continues to recognize outstanding caseworkers and seek statewide suggestions for content in DFPS Delivers, the agency's bi-weekly, online intranet newsletter. In October 2007, the Operations division launched a "How Do I...?" intranet subdirectory designed to get DFPS staff the information they need as soon as possible. This collection of pages recognizes the challenges of keeping up with the volume of changes in the agency over the last several years and provides direct answers to assist caseworkers regarding issues like travel, purchasing, and HR and legal issues. Any staff member can submit a topic or question to this subdirectory, just as staff can continue to e-mail the Commissioner in his regularly updated Q & A.

**Status: Ongoing**

Articles in the DFPS Delivers newsletter serve as a conduit for policy announcements and program initiatives, such as the expansion of Family Group Decision Making and the launching of the STAR Health Program, as well as dozens of success stories and employee profiles from around the state. The newsletter also publicizes new intranet resources, including additions to the agency's extensive Regional Resource pages and "How Do I...?" employee forum, plus recent contributions from Statewide Intake, Records Management, and the Office of Volunteer and Community Engagement. In late 2007, DFPS also added a variety of resources to the intranet stemming from the conclusion of the Commissioner's third annual "Texas Tour." These included newsletter articles, photo galleries, and answers to employee questions in "Commissioner's Q&A."

- C. **Expansion of SOE Questions** - The Survey of Organizational Excellence (SOE) is administered to all state agencies as a way of gathering employee input. Survey results are collected and analyzed by an independent research team at the University of Texas. While the vast majority of questions are standardized across organizations, DFPS does have the ability to customize parts of the SOE to meet organizational needs. Questions specifically regarding the retention issue will be included in the Spring 2008 release of the survey to staff.

**Status: In progress**

Questions specifically regarding the retention issue were included in the February 2008 release of the survey to staff. DFPS Commissioner Carey Cockerell sent an e-mail to all staff urging them to complete the survey, stating it is "one of the best vehicles to obtain feedback from staff." To further encourage participation, DFPS Delivers featured the SOE as the top story in its February 20, 2008 edition. After the survey results are analyzed, DFPS will make them available to staff on the intranet.

- D. **Commissioner's Tour** - As he has done since the beginning of his tenure, DFPS Commissioner Carey Cockerell and members of the executive team will continue to travel to

DFPS regional offices to visit with regional leadership and frontline staff. At each stop, the Commissioner holds an all-staff meeting in which attendees—from administrative technicians to caseworker supervisors—can ask the Commissioner questions face to face. The FY 2008 tour also includes a Regional Management Meeting in which regional representatives from all programs and divisions of the agency can raise issues and concerns particular to their area. All questions or concerns are logged and pursued, as appropriate.

**Status: Completed**

The most recent Commissioner’s Tour concluded in December 2007. On February 6, 2008, DFPS Delivers highlighted additions to the Commissioner’s Q&A as a result of questions asked on the Texas Tour.

**Initiative 4. Strengthen Supervision**

**Objective: Better equip agency supervisors/managers/leaders to perform their job duties and support their staff by strengthening their understanding of leadership and retention and adding “peer trainer” positions.**

- A. **STARS** - The Supporting, Training and Retaining Staff (STARS) program encourages supervisors who recently completed their basic skills training to provide online and in-person feedback on their experience and provides timely follow-up training and support. In FY 2007, DFPS redesigned STARS for implementation in all regions and all programs. In FY 2008, DFPS would like to continue implementation of the STARS program with an emphasis on measuring the program’s effectiveness on supervisor retention and revising the program when necessary.

**Status: In progress**

The STARSS program remains in the design phase. DFPS is working with resource partners from the National Staff Development and Training Association (NSDTA) as well as the American Public Human Services Association (APHSA) to develop interchangeable supervisory modules that can be customized to meet the needs of the supervisor within the regions.

- B. **CPI Redesigning Supervisor/Leadership Training** - In FY 2008, the DFPS Center for Policy and Innovation (CPI) will begin redesigning all supervisor and leadership training to provide a continuum of leadership training that begins at the worker level and extends to the executive tiers. All levels of training will include topics designed to better engage employees in the organizational culture as well as teach them their roles as “retention agents.” First phases of the new leadership development program will begin in Summer 2008.

**Status: In progress**

The agency’s leadership program, DFPS Tomorrow, is being modified and updated to reflect feedback from prior participants and agency administrators, as well as newly available leadership training components. As a result, this program will be voluntary rather than mandatory for certified supervisors and other staff above the supervisory level, and admission to the program will be through a competitive application process in each region/district. In an

effort to streamline and more efficiently develop leadership skills, participants will complete the program in one intensive year with a high level of hands-on guidance from local Career Development Coordinators. Participants will receive training in Franklin Covey's Leadership: Great Leaders, Great Team, Great Results course, in addition to continued training and emphasis on the eight core competencies of the DFPS Tomorrow program. Mentoring relationships will remain a key component of the program, along with Know \*DFPS training. This program seeks to enhance leadership skills as a part of the overall agency effort to recruit and retain highly qualified and committed staff. The new program is scheduled to roll out in Fall 2008.

- C. **PD and PA Leadership Training** - The CPS program will focus on strengthening Program Director (PD) and Program Administrator (PA) roles. Program Directors and Administrators will begin attending leadership development training and activities with a primary focus on methods for shifting all areas of CPS to more family-centered practices. Although all CPS PAs and PDs will participate, leadership development work will occur most intensively as a pilot project in Harris County (Houston) with the Conservatorship program. By instilling PAs and PDs with effective leadership skills, DFPS hopes that they will feel encouraged to employ new cultural change techniques and work with staff to positively affect retention.

**Status: In progress**

In September 2007, through funds provided by Casey Family Services, the American Public Human Services Association (APHSA) organizational development team met with CPS leadership in Houston (Region 6) to begin addressing issues facing leadership of substitute care staff. The APHSA staff conducted a number of focus groups with supervisors, frontline workers, PAs, PDs, and executive leadership to begin diagnosing organizational issues that lead to turnover. The APHSA team also spent time with frontline workers in courts, on "ride-alongs", and in the office to gain a more comprehensive understanding of regional/program issues. In November 2007, APHSA led a two day learning-by-doing institute with PAs, PDs, and supervisors to teach leadership skills in systematically addressing issues identified by staff as most critical. Areas included: on-the-job training for workers, reward and recognition, communication, etc. Each group was assigned a lead and was taught how to charter projects and develop work plans to address the issues identified in the institutes. Today in Region 6 there is a regional sponsor group (PAs and Regional Director) that receives frequent updates from the project leaders. Each workgroup continues to meet and move each project forward. Early anecdotal indicators are showing improved morale, communication, and trust of leadership.

- D. **Peer Training and Job Development** - Although the basic training course for CPS caseworkers, Basic Skills Development (BSD), was expanded to 12 weeks as part of CPS Reform, many investigators complete BSD lacking practical experience working cases. An on-the-job training (OJT) program was incorporated into BSD to provide trainees with actual casework experience, but the volume of trainees and few OJT supervisors make one-on-one training difficult. Beginning in November 2007, DFPS rolled out a plan to fully utilize the special investigator positions that were allocated but that have been difficult to hire and retain. Part of the proposal includes converting 50 of those positions to statewide CPS peer trainers. These peer trainers will ensure that trainees are able to accompany caseworkers on cases and

take part in the investigation. New investigators will have practical field experience before completing BSD and managing a caseload of their own. Through improved peer training, investigators will be more prepared for their job and will have more confidence in their abilities, which may decrease turnover.

**Status: In progress**

DFPS converted 50 of the special investigator positions to statewide CPS peer trainers. The job description for these peer trainer positions is currently being finalized. Each OJT supervisor will be assigned at least 2 peer trainer positions to be used to work with new investigators to enable them to be more prepared for their job and have more confidence in their abilities.

- E. **PSTI Partnership (NEW)** - Since the early 1990s the University of Texas Protective Services Training Institute (PSTI) has partnered with DFPS to provide ongoing continuing education and certification of workers and supervisors. In February 2008, the DFPS Executive Team, the Deans of Social Work from the University of Texas and the University of Houston, and PSTI Executives met to “re-vision” the role of PSTI in assisting DFPS in becoming a destination employer by 2015. The group developed a vision of this collaboration to include: more focus on developing training that will address learning gaps in mobile technology and that would appeal to the very different learning styles of the younger recruits, developing a training plan that is seamless and well coordinated with agency initiatives, expanding training to include support for areas of operation that support frontline staff, developing training that addresses a broad range of issues that impact retention and turnover and utilizing the universities more for research and evaluation. A planning group will be established in April 2008 to begin assessing and making recommendations for the PSTI contract for 2009. Additionally, the Executive Advisory Committee has reconvened and will meet at scheduled intervals to ensure that the partnership is progressing in the right direction.

**Initiative 5. Enhance the Work Environment**

**Objective: Explore ways to improve the work environment for staff, by addressing issues related to office space, worker safety, automation needs and innovations, and flexible work schedules. Continue efforts to improve employees’ physical and mobile work environment.**

- A. **Expand Mobile Technology Efforts** - DFPS is providing tablet PCs for substitute care and licensing staff to facilitate timely and accurate data entry and improve the quality of assessments and decision-making. Child Care Licensing (CCL) monitoring and investigative staff will start receiving their tablets in early 2008, and tablets are being phased in for half of substitute care caseworkers throughout the biennium. This will assist with meeting the more stringent timeliness standards for those programs.

**Status: In progress**

DFPS began providing tablet PCs for substitute care and licensing staff in March 2008 to facilitate timely and accurate data entry and improve the quality of assessments and decision-making. All CCL monitoring and investigative staff will receive their tablets by May 2008, and tablets are being phased in for half of substitute care caseworkers throughout the

biennium. The rollout of tablet PCs includes a two-day training introducing workers to the new hardware and providing instruction on how to integrate this powerful tool into their work practices.

- B. Mobile Caseworker Initiative** - DFPS chartered the Mobile Caseworker Initiative as an agency-wide project and is currently in the pilot phase of this effort. The purpose is to maximize the existing mobile technology investment by providing greater quality and efficient service to DFPS clients in a manner that best uses state resources. Approximately 40 caseworkers and their supervisors are participating in the pilot, which began in September 2007 and will run for a minimum of six months. In FY 2008, effectiveness of this pilot on efficiency and retention will be studied and, if successful, the initiative will be expanded to other agency areas.

**Status: In progress**

DFPS is now in the pilot assessment phase of the project. The mid-point feedback on the pilot, compiled in December 2007, was very positive. Final recommendations regarding expansion and next steps will be released in late April 2008.

- C. Tablet and Desktop Refresh** - The “tablet and desktop refresh” was underway in October 2007 and describes the replacement of outdated equipment for staff in DFPS. The new equipment includes an increase in system memory (RAM) to 1GB, a video card with 256MB of RAM, the Microsoft XP operating system, Microsoft Office 2003, and more disk storage for files, documents, and pictures. These features will enhance DFPS staff’s ability to perform their work due to increased speed, stability, security, and the compatibility to share documents with external contacts. This first phase replaces approximately 6700 desktops and laptops. The new tablet PCs that will be used to refresh the older APS devices are sturdier and offer better performance. The new sturdy design and improved performance should decrease the amount of repairs needed, thus keeping the tablets in the hands of the caseworkers with less downtime. The wireless cards for the agency's main vendor are built into the tablet, which should minimize issues with lost or broken cards.

**Status: Complete**

The tablet PC refresh of older APS devices was completed in March 2008. The new units are sturdier and offer better performance. The new sturdy design and improved performance should decrease the amount of repairs needed, thus keeping the tablets in the hands of the caseworkers with less downtime.

- D. Expand Office Space** - DFPS will acquire space for nearly 1500 employees during FY 2008. These include replacement of the Amarillo site, consolidating multiple leases into one and providing room for staff growth. The Brownwood lease will also be replaced, with an expanded new location. Region 3 is expected to see the most change, with new space in 10 different locations for 341 staff. In all, DFPS has requested new or additional space in 51 locations throughout the state for staff needs. These include new locations in Lubbock, Sweetwater, Carrollton, Cleburne, Dallas, Denton, Greenville, North Richland Hills, Plano, Athens, Canton, Henderson, Jacksonville, Houston, Pearland, Austin, Lockhart, Madisonville, Andrews, and Brownsville. Other requests will add space to already existing sites to make

room for DFPS positions and the support space required to serve the client base, such as visitations, clinical showers and Rainbow Rooms.

### **Status: Ongoing**

Since mid-October 2007, DFPS has moved into new office locations in Sweetwater and Houston, impacting 48 staff. DFPS added to existing space in Plano at the Children's Advocacy Center, Dallas Stemmons, Copperas Cove, Aransas Pass, Beeville, Kingsville and Rio Grande City. These additions provided new space and allowed room in overcrowded offices, impacting 154 employees. For the remainder of FY 2008, new office space is pending for 1432 staff, including new space in Lubbock, Brownwood, Carrollton, Plano, Cleburne, Dallas, Greenville, Northeast Tarrant County, Sherman, Athens, Canton, Henderson, Jacksonville, Mt. Vernon, Palestine, Livingston, Houston, Pearland, Rosenberg, Austin, Lockhart, Madisonville, Andrews, Brownsville and McAllen. Additional space is being acquired in Levelland, Plainview, Bowie, Graham, Wichita Falls, Arlington, Denton, Sherman, Conroe, Houston, Taylor, Hondo, Victoria, Big Springs, San Angelo, Corpus Christi, Edinburg, Harlingen and Laredo.

Within the regions, DFPS has placed an increasing emphasis on locating with community partners, both within enterprise space and at outside locations. Community partners are now located at DFPS office locations in Corpus Christi (police officers), and in Austin with both SafePlace and the Adoption Coalition sharing agency space. In addition, liaisons with Superior Health Plan are located at DFPS offices in Lubbock, Abilene, Arlington, Nacogdoches/Beaumont, Houston, Austin, and San Antonio. New partnerships at community agencies include Hudson Oaks Police Department (Parker County), Dallas Police Department, Travis County Juvenile Probation, Bexar County Sheriff's Department, Nueces and Webb County District Attorney's office and Nueces County Juvenile Justice Center. Co-locations have also occurred in community hospitals in Houston and Austin.

Building community relationships and partnerships is an integral part of DFPS' work and is critical to providing clients with needed support. Co-location provides the opportunity for enhanced interagency communication and cooperation along with an effective alternative for additional office space. Relocation and co-location of DFPS staff in regional community-based offices as well as in workplaces of local officials and organizations facilitates teamwork, better understanding of roles and expectations, and efficient working relationships. Co-location is in place in many areas of the state and has proven to be very beneficial.

- E. Formalize Processes for Flexible Work Schedules** - HHSC HR policy creates the opportunity to use flexible work schedules to accommodate staff needs within agency needs. In FY 2008, DFPS will develop an internal formalized process for requests for flex schedules, compressed workweeks, and part-time and job-sharing opportunities. The goal of this is to allow and track the usage of alternative work schedules or arrangements for employees in certain situations. Policy will be designed to allow flexibility for employees while maintaining the operational efficiency of the agency. The agency will also track the use of alternative schedules and compare data to determine if this increases staff retention/satisfaction.

**Status: In progress**

The flexible work schedule policy/procedure for DFPS is currently drafted and is being reviewed by the Work Environment Workgroup.

**Initiative 6. Improve Hiring Practices**

**Objective: Provide a comprehensive approach to improving hiring by identifying and/or developing policies, procedures and best practices that will help the agency locate, recruit and hire applicants that have an aptitude for direct delivery work and are capable of providing the highest level of service to DFPS clients.**

A. **Stipends for CPS Investigators** - DFPS provides stipends to attract and retain staff in the critical investigator roles in Child Protective Services. This job function has been the area of most significant challenge in retaining staff. The stipend program provides investigation caseworkers and supervisors a \$5,000 annual stipend, paid in monthly increments of \$416.67.

**Status: Ongoing**

DFPS is continuing the stipend program for CPS investigators.

B. **Merit Raises** - DFPS structured its budget priorities in the current biennium to allow for a merit program to recognize employees for jobs well done in supporting or delivering services to clients. These raises are deployed in quarterly allocations of merit slots to all DFPS divisions and regions. Resources are available to provide for recognition of about one quarter of DFPS staff. Each slot may be given as a merit salary increase of either 2.5 percent or 5.0 percent of the employee's monthly salary, or a one-time merit payment of 3.5 percent of the employee's annual salary. Employees must be performing the job at a level above that which is normally expected or required and be in compliance with agency work rules.

**Status: In progress**

Between September 2007 and February 2008 DFPS managers have given 1,772 merit raises to staff.

C. **Other Compensation-Related Factors** - DFPS will provide a pay differential to staff at the Statewide Intake hotline who work the hard-to-fill overnight and weekend shifts. The Department will also be exploring a tiered approach to compensation for newly hired staff, as well as continuing stipends to encourage APS caseworkers to attain a higher level of education in APS-related fields.

**Status: In progress**

DFPS is developing a compensation package for possible inclusion as a funding request for the FY 2010-2011 biennium. The compensation package will address high turnover positions.

D. **Expansion of Pre-employment Testing (PET) and Continued Evaluation** - In 2008 DFPS will expand its use of PET to the Child Care Licensing (Daycare and Residential) and Statewide Intake programs. In FY 2007, staff began to establish the appropriate tests and scoring for these programs. The tests will be available in the fall of FY 2008.

The use of the pre-employment test by CPS and APS programs was evaluated in February 2007. Phase II of this evaluation will be expanded in FY 2008 to include performance metrics, turnover and longevity data across FY 2005-2007. This will allow the agency to compare the staff hired through the use of the test to determine its usefulness in screening new employees who will be successful at DFPS.

**Status: In progress**

The purpose of the PET is to quantify applicant skill sets for objective, consistent assessment and thereby reliably screen applicants. By selecting applicants who rate highly on skills and attributes associated with direct services work, DFPS would hire the right people and fill vacancies more quickly.

The PET for Child Care Licensing (Daycare and Residential) and Statewide Intake program was deployed as planned. Child Care Licensing began utilizing the PET in January 2008, and 66 assessments had been administered as of March 4th. The Statewide Intake PET was launched in February 2008, and 50 assessments had been completed as of March 4th.

The Phase II evaluation of the PET used by the CPS and APS programs is in progress and a final report is expected in Spring 2008. This report will combine testing data with performance metrics, turnover and longevity data across FY 2005-2007.

E. **Targeted Degree Recruitment** - SB 758 directs DFPS to target recruitment efforts toward individuals who hold a bachelor's degree or advanced degree in at least one of the following academic areas:

- Social Work
- Counseling
- Early Childhood Education
- Psychology
- Criminal Justice
- Elementary or Secondary Education
- Sociology
- Human Services

DFPS will work with HHSC to track this information and monitor if targeted recruitment affects job suitability and ultimately, retention.

**Status: In progress**

The required system changes to allow ongoing tracking of degree information has been communicated to Health and Human Services Human Resources and their HR vendor, Convergys. Convergys continues to explore options to enhance the application tracking system's ability to report on degree types. In the interim, DFPS has received from Convergys an ad hoc report that provides additional detail about the educational background of applicants. This data will provide baseline information on the recruitment of individuals with targeted degrees. A tracking system is being developed to capture the ongoing work of DFPS



field staff to attend job fairs, speak to college classes and community events. DFPS is exploring vendors that could be used to target online recruitment to the specific degree areas.

In the last six months, DFPS has partnered with 30 colleges or universities across the state to attend 47 job fairs where DFPS staff inform potential applicants about the important work being done at the agency. Nearly half of the job fairs have focused on recruiting social work students. The other job fairs have targeted a wider population of applicants that included many of the other targeted degree areas. In addition to formal job fairs, agency representatives have participated in speaking engagements at local universities to recruit eligible students for the stipend program. DFPS continues to use advertisements in local newspapers particularly in rural areas of the state where a lack of applicants is an issue.

- F. **Termination Statistics Report** - In early FY 2007, DFPS created the Termination Statistics report, which gives managers the ability to review and compare monthly agency retention statistics down to a unit level. This report, in concert with existing performance management tools, allows managers to pinpoint high achieving areas and areas needing improvement. In FY 2008, DFPS plans to train managers on the use of this data for ongoing review of areas in need of targeted response by the agency.

**Status: Complete**

A Computer-Based Training was developed to support managers in using this intranet tool. The training was distributed to field staff in early 2008. It allows managers to pinpoint high achieving areas and areas needing improvement. Managers have had positive response to this tool. Some are currently using it to examine concerns in a county about staff turnover and are able to get direct results of reason for leaving.

- G. **Workforce Stabilization** - A Workforce Stabilization workgroup has been initiated with the purpose of reviewing the DFPS hiring process of CPS caseworkers from recruitment through assumption of full caseload. Once the review is completed, the group will recommend and implement process improvements and establish measures to evaluate effects on retention of staff within the first year of hire.

**Status: Complete**

This group initiated work in the areas of realistic job previews for caseworkers, began discussion of recruitment plans and examined the hiring practices currently used by the agency. The work of this group was folded into the WSRI workgroup for Improve Hiring Processes.

**Initiative 7. Region 8 Retention Pilot**

**Objective: Serve as an incubator for ideas and innovations that support retention of staff. Serve as a place where identified recommendations can be tried and evaluated so that successful ideas are disseminated to the rest of the state.**

DFPS' Center for Policy and Innovation (CPI) has begun a new retention project in the San Antonio region (Region 8), where turnover has been higher than the state average in recent

years. The Center's newly formed organizational development unit will coordinate research activities aimed at identifying the various causes of turnover in the region and take a systems approach in designing intervention options for each of them, including compensation, the recruitment and hiring process, working conditions, and an organizational culture that takes high turnover for granted. The organizational development specialists will first organize, analyze and present the retention data that already exists. A first report, containing recommendations, will be issued in spring 2008.

### **Status: Ongoing**

A series of facilitated brainstorming sessions, focus groups, committee meetings, and workgroups were conducted with the deputy and assistant commissioners, members of state office retention workgroups, regional management, program specialists, resource support staff and administrative staff. The groups were convened to explore two primary retention questions: 1) why do staff leave the agency, and 2) what strategies can be deployed to retain a quality protective services workforce.

After analyzing information from turnover data, exit interviews, focus groups, and employee surveys, five Region 8 workgroups were created to address these most common retention issues: workload management, salary, hiring, training and development, and morale and culture. The workgroups developed a list of recommendations for each area to retain staff and increase staff morale. The list included initiatives such as: enhancing worker and management trainings; reviewing policies, practices, procedures and job tasks; creating an employee “perk list”; creating a career ladder and establishing criteria to recognize and reward employees’ performance; and enhancing the hiring and internal promotion process. In an effort to collect more comprehensive retention, morale and turnover data, the workgroups and the executive team developed questions to construct an exit interview survey. Supervisors and managers would complete the agency’s Separation Webform, which notified the hiring specialist, who would send the survey to the exiting employee (including employees moving to another agency position).

In January 2008, the Regional Retention pilot was included in the new Workforce Support and Retention Initiative (WSRI) strategy as an incubator for ideas and innovations that support retention of staff. As an incubator, Region 8 will become a place where identified recommendations can be tried and evaluated so that successful ideas are disseminated to the rest of the state. The CPI will report progress to the WSRI workgroup, the Executive Steering Committee and to the selected regional leadership sponsor group at scheduled intervals. The Region 8 report of findings and preliminary recommendations will be released in April 2008.

### **FY 2008 (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter) Turnover Highlights**

- The Turnover and HR-Related Data for Fiscal Years 2007 and 2008, 2nd Quarter (see Appendix) show that the overall DFPS turnover rate decreased from 21.2% in FY 2007 to an annualized average of 19.7% as of the second quarter of FY 2008.
  - The programs with the highest turnover are SWI (23.6%) and CPS (21.9%)

- The programs with the lowest turnover are CCL (15.2%) and RCCL (14%)
- The regions with the highest turnover are Tyler CPS (42.1%) and Arlington APS (41.8%)
- The regions with the lowest turnover are El Paso CPS (21.9%) and Lubbock APS (4.6%)
- The job classification that showed the most improvement from FY 2007 is CPS Investigators, decreasing from 40.7% in FY 2007 to 35.4% for the first half of FY 2008.
- SWI saw an increase in turnover from 20.0% in FY 2007 to 23.6% for the first half of FY 2008.
- Supervisors in CPS and APS also experienced an increase in turnover for the first half of FY 2008.
- All other DFPS programs saw overall decreases in turnover from FY 2007 to YTD FY 2008.

## **Conclusion**

Though there has been a decrease in turnover for the agency during the first part of FY 2008, the turnover trend in past years would indicate that the next two quarters of the fiscal year will be a time when DFPS typically has its highest turnover.

# TURNOVER AND HR-RELATED DATA FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007

## RIDER 13 EMPLOYEE TURNOVER REPORT

Functional Title	Average Employees	Turnover Rate <sup>1</sup>
<b>DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES (DFPS)</b>		
All Employees	9233.00	21.2%
<b>CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES (CPS)</b>		
CPS Workers	3752.0	34.1%
CPS Supervisors	742.8	7.4%
CPS Program <sup>3</sup>	6580.0	23.8%
CPS Specialist II <sup>2</sup>	2206.5	40.8%
CPS Specialist III	634.3	27.7%
CPS Specialist IV	680.8	16.7%
CPS Specialist V	28.8	20.9%
CPS Special Investigator	201.8	41.1%
CPS CVS Caseworker	1192.0	33.8%
CPS FBSS Caseworker	543.8	27.4%
CPS INV Caseworker	1479.5	40.7%
<b>ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES (APS)</b>		
APS Workers	628.5	22.3%
APS Supervisors	95.0	4.2%
APS Program <sup>3</sup>	863.5	17.7%
<b>CHILD CARE LICENSING (CCL)</b>		
CCL Workers <sup>4</sup>	336.5	15.8%
CCL Supervisors	47.8	14.7%
CCL Program <sup>3</sup>	466.8	15.4%
<b>STATEWIDE INTAKE (SWI)</b>		
SWI Workers	245.8	26.4%
SWI Supervisors	28.0	3.6%
SWI Program <sup>3</sup>	329.5	20.0%

<sup>1</sup>NOTE: DFPS turnover is calculated using the method required by the LBB performance measure for CPS caseworker turnover: (the total number of full time, regular employees who terminated during the period and remain terminated DIVIDED BY the average number of full time, regular active employees on the last day of each quarter in the period) TIMES 100 to produce a percentage. As a result, the State Auditor's Office turnover calculation varies slightly from DFPS due to methodological differences in calculating the average number of active employees and the total number of terminated employees.

<sup>2</sup>Entry level for CPS workers is CPS Specialist II. The state classification for this level is Protective Services Specialist II.

<sup>3</sup>Because program group totals include **all** employees in that program, this number will exceed the total number of workers and supervisors in the program.

<sup>4</sup>All CCL counts include CCL, CCI, and RCCL employees.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

# TURNOVER AND HR-RELATED DATA FOR SECOND QUARTER FISCAL YEAR 2008

## RIDER 13 EMPLOYEE ANNUALIZED TURNOVER REPORT

Functional Title	Average Employees	Turnover Rate <sup>1</sup>
<b>DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES (DFPS)</b>		
All Employees	10192.0	19.7%
<b>CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES (CPS)</b>		
CPS Workers	4100.0	30.6%
CPS Supervisors	816.0	10.0%
CPS Program <sup>3</sup>	7306.0	21.9%
CPS Specialist II <sup>2</sup>	2513.5	36.6%
CPS Specialist III	752.5	21.3%
CPS Specialist IV	599.5	13.7%
CPS Specialist V	20.0	20.0%
CPS Special Investigator	214.5	42.0%
CPS CVS Caseworker	1331.5	31.5%
CPS FBSS Caseworker	603.0	26.9%
CPS INV Caseworker	1582.5	35.4%
<b>ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES (APS)</b>		
APS Workers	650.5	20.3%
APS Supervisors	98.0	6.1%
APS Program <sup>3</sup>	899.0	16.7%
<b>CHILD CARE LICENSING (CCL)</b>		
CCL Workers <sup>4</sup>	258.0	17.1%
CCL Supervisors	36.0	0.0%
CCL Program <sup>3</sup>	354.5	15.2%
<b>RESIDENTIAL CHILD CARE LICENSING (RCCL)</b>		
RCCL Workers <sup>4</sup>	129.0	15.5%
RCCL Supervisors	22.0	18.2%
RCCL Program <sup>3</sup>	209.0	11.5%
<b>STATEWIDE INTAKE (SWI)</b>		
SWI Workers	254.0	29.9%
SWI Supervisors	29.5	0.0%
SWI Program <sup>3</sup>	339.5	23.6%

<sup>1</sup>NOTE: DFPS turnover is calculated using the method required by the LBB performance measure for CPS caseworker turnover: (the total number of full time, regular employees who terminated during the period and remain terminated DIVIDED BY the average number of full time, regular filled positions on the last day of each quarter in the period) TIMES 100 to produce a percentage. As a result, the State Auditor's Office turnover calculation varies slightly from DFPS due to methodological differences in calculating the average number of filled positions and the total number of terminated employees.

<sup>2</sup>Entry level for CPS workers is CPS Specialist II. The state classification for this level is Protective Services Specialist II.

<sup>3</sup>Because program group totals include **all** employees in that program, this number will exceed the total number of workers and supervisors in the program.

<sup>4</sup>CCL and RCCL Workers include employees serving in worker job codes and in the Inspector job codes.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)