

**Senate Bill 1, Article II, Department of
Family Protective Services, Rider 8**

**87th Legislature, Regular Session Bi-Annual
Report**

Human Resources Management Plan

FY 2020 - FY 2021

Third Quarter



TEXAS
**Department of Family
and Protective Services**

September 2021

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DFPS MISSION

We promote safe and healthy families and protect children and vulnerable adults from abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

DFPS VISION

Improving the lives of those we serve.

DFPS VALUES

Accountable: We act with a sense of urgency to deliver results in an accountable, ethical, and transparent manner.

Respectful: We recognize the value of each person and act timely, value privacy, and treat all with respect.

Diverse: We promote diversity, inclusion, and equality by honoring individual differences.

Collaborative: Whether through our staff or contractors, we work in partnership with clients, families, and communities to ensure our mutual success.

Professional: We value our staff and strive for excellence while being professional, passionate, and innovative.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Senate Bill 1 (SB 1), Rider 8, of the 87th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2021, directs the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) to develop a Human Resources Management Plan (HRMP) designed to improve employee morale and retention. The plan must focus on reducing employee turnover through better management and to report employee turnover rates by job category for the preceding 12 months. The report must be sent to the Senate Committee on Finance, the House Committee on Appropriations, the Legislative Budget Board, and the Governor by March 31 and September 30 of each fiscal year (FY). SB 1 further indicates that the effectiveness of the agency's plan shall be measured by whether there is a reduction in employee turnover rates at the agency, specifically the reduction in the turnover rates for caseworkers.

In order to provide transparency and a comprehensive overview of the workforce, this report includes additional information beyond what is required by the Legislature. Additional reporting is provided on hiring and fill rates at the agency, as well as a summary of the results from the latest Survey of Employee Engagement (SEE) and the State Auditor's Office (SAO) Exit Survey, when available. A comparison of turnover data by program is included in Appendix A of this report to ensure consistency in the data provided in the annual summary of employee turnover comparison report.

As new significant trends in turnover rates emerge, this report will provide a summary of DFPS's efforts to analyze the changes and monitor program initiatives adopted to address identified issues. In addition, this report will provide updates on key workforce division initiatives in place to sustain the overall health of the agency.

DFPS is experiencing a higher rate of agency-wide turnover when compared to FY 2020 and it remains higher than the SAO statewide average for all agencies. Compared to FY 2020, decreases in turnover occurred only in Child Protective Services (CPS), and initiatives have been adopted by programs to address underlying issues. Continued progress in implementing HRMP initiatives serves as evidence of the full commitment of executive leadership to ensuring the workforce can provide exceptional services to Texans in need. DFPS will continue to closely examine workforce trends across the program.

TURNOVER AND RETENTION

Turnover data for the current fiscal year (FY 2021) is complete through the end of the third quarter (Q3) due to limits on the availability of finalized data before the reporting deadline of September 30, 2021. Turnover through Q3 FY 2021 is compared to turnover to the previous full fiscal year turnover. There is some seasonality in turnover that may affect the comparisons. Future reports will reflect programmatic changes implemented in FY 2021. Additional details on turnover and retention findings are provided in Appendix A. Details on agency and program tenure are provided in Appendix B.

According to the Texas State Auditor's Classified Employee Turnover for Fiscal Year 2020, the statewide turnover rate was 18.6 percent for all state agencies. In FY 2020, DFPS averaged 13,153 employees with a turnover rate of 18.5 percent.

DFPS Turnover and Retention Findings

- DFPS has reported a 17.7 percent increase in turnover agency-wide from 18.5 percent in FY 2020 to 21.8 percent in Q3 FY 2021.
- On average, for the third quarter of FY 2021, 45 percent of all DFPS employees have five or more years of tenure with the agency.

CPS Turnover and Retention Findings¹

- Q3 FY 2021 CPS caseworker turnover of 18.5 percent outperforms the SB 1 performance measure for caseworker turnover of 25.5 percent.
- Q3 FY 2021 turnover for CPS workers has:
 - Decreased 11.6 percent since FY 2020 for Conservatorship (CVS) caseworkers (FY 2020² at 24.7 percent to Q3 FY 2021 21.9 percent).
 - Increased 10.2 percent since FY 2020 for Family-Based Safety Services (FBSS) caseworkers (FY 2020 at 18.6 percent to Q3 FY 2021 at 20.4 percent).
- Q3 FY 2021 turnover for CPS supervisors has decreased 15.0 percent (FY 2020 at 9.2 percent to Q3 FY 2021 at 7.8 percent) and
- Q3 FY 2021 turnover for the CPS program decreased 5.8 percent (FY 2020 at 18.4 percent to Q3 FY 2021 at 17.3 percent).
- On average for Q3 FY 2021, approximately 62 percent of the CVS workers and 62 percent of FBSS workers have at least two years of tenure.

Child Protective Investigations (CPI) Turnover and Retention Findings³

- Q3 FY 2021 CPI worker turnover of 41.6 percent exceeds the SB1 performance measure for worker turnover of 25.5 percent.
- Q3 FY 2021 turnover for CPI workers has:
 - Increased 44.4 percent since FY 2020 for Investigations (INV) caseworkers (FY 2020 at 28.8 percent to Q3 FY 2021 at 41.6 percent).
 - Increased 135.0 percent since FY 2020 for Special Investigators (SI) caseworkers (FY 2020 at 8.0 percent to Q3 FY 2021 at 18.7 percent).
 - Decreased 20.1 percent since FY 2020 for Residential Child Investigations (RCI) caseworkers (FY 2020 at 28.8 percent to Q3 FY 2021 at 23.0 percent).
 - Increased 139.6 percent since FY 2020 for Daycare Investigations (DCI) caseworkers (FY 2020 at 18.2 percent to Q3 FY 2021 at 43.6 percent).
- Q3 FY 2021 turnover for CPI supervisors has increased 31.6 percent (FY 2020 at 10.3 percent to Q3 FY 2021 at 13.6 percent).
- Q3 FY 2021 turnover for the CPI program increased 50.4 percent (FY 2020 at 22.3 percent to Q3 FY 2021 at 33.5 percent).

¹ SB 1 performance measure was created before the split of CPS and CPI into two separate divisions. The 25.5 percent SB 1 performance measure is for CPS and CPI combined.

² The turnover for CVS caseworkers and supervisors in FY 2020, however, includes caseworkers separating from DFPS to transfer to Community Based Care (CBC) providers who took over case management responsibilities in FY 2020. Absent those transfers, the turnover rate in fiscal year 2020 for CVS would have been lower and, as a result, is not directly comparable to turnover in prior years.

³ SB1 performance measure was created before the split of CPS and CPI into two separate divisions. The 25.5 percent SB 1 performance measure is for CPS and CPI combined.

- On average for Q3 FY 2021, approximately 57 percent of INV workers have two or more years of tenure.

APS Turnover and Retention Findings

- Q3 FY 2021 APS worker turnover of 22.3 percent is above the SB1 performance measure for APS caseworker turnover of 20 percent.
- Q3 FY 2021 turnover for APS workers of 22.3 percent has increased 24.5 percent since FY 2020, when it was 17.9 percent.
- Q3 FY 2021 turnover for APS supervisors has increased 818.4 percent (FY 2020 at 1.2 percent to Q3 FY 2021 at 11.2 percent).
- Q3 FY 2021 turnover for the APS program increased 30.9 percent (FY 2020 at 15.2 percent to Q3 FY 2021 3 at 20.0 percent).
- Q3 FY 2021, 70 percent of APS In-Home workers have 2 or more years of tenure.

Statewide Intake (SWI) Turnover and Retention Findings

- SWI does not have SB 1 caseworker turnover targets.
- Q3 FY 2021 turnover for SWI workers has increased 13.0 percent since FY 2020 (FY 2020 at 7.2 percent to Q3 FY 2021 at 8.1 percent).
- Q3 FY 2021 turnover for SWI supervisors has increased 122.7 percent since FY 2020 (FY 2020 at 2.7 percent to Q3 FY 2021 at 6.1 percent).
- Q3 FY 2021 turnover for the SWI program increased 16.1 percent (FY 2020 at 6.8 percent to Q3 FY 2021 at 7.9 percent).
- On average for Q3 FY 2021, 86 percent of SWI workers have two or more years of tenure.

PROGRAM INITIATIVES OF CPI, APS, SWI, and CPS

To better address turnover trends in the CPI, APS, SWI, and CPS programs, DFPS has conducted analysis with program leadership in each program to understand changes by region and by the type of workers leaving the agency.

During FY 2021, CPI has taken on multiple initiatives including:

- Continued utilization of feedback from regional and statewide supervisor advisory groups to make improvements to systems, policy/practice, and retention.
- Continue to use weekly broadcasts to message important communications and monthly packaging of policy and practice changes, complete with tools and talking points that all managers must use in their monthly meeting with their staff.
- CPI's regional leadership meets quarterly with their system's improvement staff to review and evaluate business plan metrics and adjust strategies for improvements accordingly.
- CPI continues to develop its regional leadership by offering the intentional leadership workshop.
- Adaptive Coaching Program has continued to progress by establishing "The Adaptive Coaching Institute" which continues to train new coaches and creating overall sustainability of the institute. The Adaptive Coaching model supports the growth and enhancement of supervisor leadership skills.

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- Continued utilization of feedback from regional and statewide training councils to make improvements to trainings for staff and leadership development, as well as retention.
- CPI Professional Development Training model for new staff (August/September 2021), which will focus on enhancing staff development to ensure that staff are equipped with the necessary knowledge and tools to effectively complete required job tasks.
- Establishment of a Supervisor Framework has been reviewed for implementation. The new supervisor framework provides guidance and tools for supervisors to be successful in their roles.
- Embraced technology to successfully accomplish the work during the ongoing pandemic. Regional leadership have been creative in holding virtual meetings, limited gatherings, and safe recognition events to stay engaged with staff.
- Held monthly “Talk Training to Us” sessions for staff/leadership to share training needs and started a Leadership Book Club throughout the state of Texas.
- Created Mentor Program Specialists positions within CPI. These positions have a focus on improving the mentor program by increasing the support provided to new staff throughout their first year in the agency, in an effort to build internal relationships that could offset turnover and increase workforce stability.
- The Master Investigation program has worked in regions all across the state, working investigations, providing mentoring, and training to CPI.

The APS program also implemented multiple initiatives in FY 2021 including:

- As FY 21 ended, APS has evaluated the temporary COVID-19 Policy which limited in person interaction between APS and APS clients, alleged perpetrators, and collaterals.
- In Q4 FY 21 APS modified the Temporary COVID-19 policy to include a minimum of one in person contact with the client.
- Personal Protective Equipment is still being provided to APS field staff.
- The Center for Organizational Excellence “CLOE” is converting some virtual classes back to in person training with contingency plans for COVID-19 related issues.
- The caseworker mentor program continues to provide support to new APS specialist.
- The supervisor mentor program continues to provide new supervisors or supervisors of any tenure who need it the support of a mentor supervisor.
- APS is experiencing higher turnover than in previous quarters. Local district directors are trying to pin-point the cause of rising turnover. COVID-19 is a likely contributor and the return to being back in the field and more in person interviews has raised concerns.
- Intakes are back to pre-pandemic levels and new staff are having difficulty managing workloads and all field staff are overwhelmed with rising caseloads during a global pandemic.
- APS is seeking to pay overtime out each month for staff who assist in critical need areas that are understaffed and have large caseloads to cover. Paying OT on a monthly basis is a needed incentive to our staff who are going above and beyond to serve our clients.
- APS is seeking to utilize ACL grant money and lapsed salary dollars to hire frontline and supporting staff across the state. By utilizing these funds, we can “hire ahead” and adjust hiring as needed to respond to anticipated turnover. When we keep a stable workforce, we find that our turnover is reduced. But we must stay ahead of turnover because it takes about 6 months to fully train a new hire to a point that they are case assignable and productive.
- APS is also providing one-time merits to meritorious staff through Administration for Community Living (ACL) grant funds and intend to continue through FY 22.

The SWI program also implemented multiple initiatives in FY 2021 including:

- Incorporated the CPI and CCI screeners into the SWI reporting structure, effective November 1, 2020. DFPS moved this function to Statewide Intake in the current fiscal year to enhance the focus on screening of abuse and neglect allegations earlier in the process, at the Intake state. This operational change will also strengthen training for screeners and bring consistency to the screening process. This request will align appropriations with current agency operations and requires no additional funding.
- Converted classroom-based Basic Skills Development and On the Job Training to online virtual training in response to COVID-19. SWI is monitoring the effectiveness of this model and feels comfortable with this approach until in-person trainings can safely resume.
- Completed a comprehensive review and update to the SWI Policy Handbook. The goals of the project are to remove unnecessary procedure entries, avoid repetition, present an improved organizational structure and increase clarity. Seven updated chapters of the SWI handbook have been published, and two others are under review.
- In August 2021, SWI instituted its new telework policy. The ability to telework continues to be a key component to retention as evidenced in SWI's internal retention survey. Considering how well we maintained continuity of operations with full time telework due to the COVID-19 pandemic, SWI post-pandemic telework policy opens telework up to all qualified employees, eliminating the competitive element to get telework status that kept SWI at 50%.

The CPS program also implemented multiple initiatives in FY 2021 including:

- Director of Field conducts bi-annual tours across the state to meet directly with each region's workforce: from support staff to caseworkers and all regional leadership (supervisors and above). They allow all employees to speak and be heard while utilizing anonymous polling software and surveys to capture the regions' feedback about what is working well and what areas need improvement. The feedback collected from the regions is addressed with the Regional Directors and leadership of the regions to put actionable items in place to improve work culture and practice improvements. Regions have various forms of giving praises and recognition to staff, this helps with morale and retention. Some examples of these initiatives include but are not limited to; yearly staff appreciation luncheons, employee of the month programs, mentor support groups, acknowledging case assignability and worker certification achievements, and elevating achievements/examples of leadership for higher level acknowledgement.
- Worker/staff advisory groups to give feedback on specific issues to states are held at the Regional level and at the State Office.
- Management Leadership will conduct retention calls and or meetings to offer support to new staff that are newly hired in the agency. The information gathered, is used to help understand what these new staff need to be successful in their new positions. They also gather feedback on what type of training, or development, is further needed as they start working out in the field.
- Ongoing communication from CPS Regional Directors to all level of staff to ensure that changes, policy and resources are being messaged timely.
- Mentor focus groups were developed, and feedback sessions were held with mentors across the State.

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- Many regions will conduct exit interviews with employees to identify trends and patterns on why staff leave or resign from the agency. Regional leadership will utilize this information during our all managers meetings to discuss trends, patterns, and solutions.
- Director of Field meets monthly with Center for Learning and Organizational Excellence (CLOE) division to discuss the training needs of all levels of staff. To include discussing the type educational training and support that can help workers, supervisor, program directors gain on going knowledge and skills for the work that they are conducting.
- CPS regional leadership met quarterly with their Regional System’s Improvement staff to review and evaluate business plan metrics and adjust strategies for improvements accordingly throughout the fiscal year.

The Human Resources Division will continue to monitor implementation of these initiatives and coordinate with programs to determine the impact of these efforts on turnover trends.

HIRING AND FILL RATES

The DFPS Talent Acquisition Group (TAG) supports recruiting and hiring activities within APS, CPS, CPI, and SWI divisions. In addition to participating in recruitment activities, TAG staff screen, interview, and hire applicants to fill direct delivery program positions. TAG continues to resolve process questions, monitor screening services, and secure bilingual testing. In conjunction with Human Resources (HR) staff, TAG also provides policy interpretation for hiring related questions, as well as on-boarding for new employees in the Centralized Accounting and Payroll/Personnel System (CAPPS).

Table 1: FY 2020 to Q3 FY 2021 Hiring Funnel

Stage of Hiring Process	Number of Applicants
Applied	~310,000
Met Initial Screening Criteria	~257,000
Referred for Further Screening	~219,000
Interviewed	~ 55,000
Hired	~ 7,280

As reported in Table 1 above, of the 310,000 direct-delivery applications received for FY 2020 to the third quarter of FY 2021, approximately 257,000 (83 percent) met initial screening criteria. Of those, about 219,000 (85 percent) also completed the required competency assessment and moved forward in the hiring process. An estimated 55,000 were interviewed and 7,280 were hired between FY 2020 and Q3 FY 2021. Some applicants may have been interviewed multiple times depending on the type(s) of position(s) applied to as well as the number of times the candidate applied.

The agency monitors the percentage of filled positions in comparison to the positions available to fill within each program, commonly referred to as fill rates, to evaluate the need for additional resources or to make adjustments to hiring strategies to prevent unnecessary delays in hiring.

The number of filled Full time employees (FTE’S) is an indicator of the health of the program because too many vacancies can lead to higher caseloads, an increase in turnover, and the potential for services to families to be less effective. The direct-delivery hiring model implemented during FY 2016 has proven to be effective in maintaining and in some cases, improving caseworker fill-rates by reducing the time it takes to fill a vacated position.

Table 2: Q3 of FY 2021 Fill Rates

Program	Fill Rate
APS	~96%
CPS	~95%
CPI	~92%
SWI	~93%

Fill rates lowered during this fiscal year. Each program experience more turnover this year as compared to other fiscal years. Contributing factors are post/current pandemic workforce, Children Without Placements work, and continued work stress.

STATE AUDITOR’S OFFICE (SAO) EXIT SURVEY

At the time of an employee’s voluntary separation from the agency, the SAO sends an invitation to the former employee’s mailing address that contains details on completing the online exit survey. This voluntary survey allows recently separated employees to provide feedback that may be used by state agencies to understand the reasons staff separate and to use those insights to improve employee retention. The Q3 FY 2021, SAO survey response rate was 17.0 percent. Data on which program participants belong to must be self-reported and is inconsistent; therefore, the available data are reported for DFPS as a whole.

Findings and Analysis

According to the SAO’s findings over the past three years, “Poor working conditions/ environment” has been the number one reason former employees reported for leaving DFPS. The SAO report further indicates that retirement and, “Issues with my supervisor/issues with employees I supervise” are among the top reasons being reported. The broad nature of the reason types provided in the SAO survey make it difficult to pinpoint the real issue being pointed out by those that participate. DFPS continues to enhance the selection of supervisors and managers through the introduction of supervisor assessments and cross-program supervisory hiring boards. In addition, the agency launched a “360 Degree Assessment”, with a focus on helping managers and supervisors identify both strengths and weaknesses while working towards increased competence and effectiveness.

DFPS EXIT SURVEY

In order to build on the foundation of the SAO exit survey and to gain additional insights into the reasons staff leave the agency, DFPS entered into a partnership with the Institute for Organizational Excellence at The University of Texas at Austin to survey both voluntary and

involuntary separations from the agency. The resulting survey is a custom instrument that collects responses online, over the phone, and by mail to maximize response rates. The tool includes more specific questions about the reasons for leaving the agency in order to provide more actionable feedback from former employees.

Findings and Analysis

The University of Texas at Austin started conducting the DFPS exit surveys in September 2018. As of Q3 FY 2021, the response rate for voluntary separations was 37.9 percent and the response rate for involuntary separations was 10.1 percent. The four reasons listed most by employees that separated voluntarily were work related stress, lack of communication, issues with supervisor, and work safety concerns. The top four concerns listed by employees whose separation was involuntary were that management didn’t encourage their feedback and suggestions, that staff didn’t feel supported by their supervisor, didn’t receive adequate and constructive feedback about their performance, and didn’t feel valued as a member of the team. DFPS Human Resources Division receives quarterly reports that contain a summary of responses and comments to help management make needed changes and assist DFPS in identifying ways to reduce employee turnover and improve the work environment.

Table 3: Exit Survey Comparison

Criteria	SAO Exit Survey Q3 FY 2021	DFPS Exit Survey Q3 FY 2021 Voluntary	DFPS Exit Survey Q3 FY 2021 Involuntary
Response Rate	17.0%	37.9%	10.1%
Outreach	At the time of a voluntary separation, the SAO sends an invitation to the former employee’s mailing address that contains details on completing the online exit survey.	Former employees that separate voluntarily receive the DFPS survey questionnaire via email, telephone call, and letter.	Former employees that separate involuntarily receive the DFPS survey questionnaire via email and letter.
Top Reasons for Leaving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor working conditions/environment • Retirement • Issues with my supervisor/issues with employees I supervise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work related stress • Lack of communication • Work safety concerns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management didn’t encourage their feedback and suggestions • Staff didn’t feel supported by their supervisor • Didn’t receive adequate and constructive feedback about their performance • Didn’t feel valued as a member of the team

*Separation of Voluntary vs. Involuntary responses is not available for SAO Exit Surveys

SURVEY OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT (SEE)

The Survey of Employee Engagement (SEE) is a biannual survey required by the Texas Legislature for Texas state agencies, nonprofit organizations, and businesses to help leaders and managers understand how their employees feel about their work, their workplace, and their

employers. The FY 2020 SEE was open to staff from July 4 – August 7. SEE results were sent to DFPS divisions on September 2020.

- Of the 12,250 employees invited to take the survey in 2020, 6,170 responded for a response rate of 50.4 percent. The DFPS response rate is considered high, which implies DFPS employees are invested in the organization and are willing to contribute towards making improvements within the workplace.
- Scores above 350 are desirable and when scores dip below 300, there should be cause for concern. Scores above 400 are the product of a highly engaged workforce. In 2020, the agency overall score was 384, an increase from 378 in 2018.

Levels of Engagement:

The 2020 DFPS Survey of Employee Engagement (SEE), which had a 50.4 percent response rate, indicated the following employee engagement levels:

- 26 percent of employees are highly engaged.
- 29 percent are engaged.
- 34 percent are moderately engaged.
- 11 percent are disengaged.

Highly engaged employees are willing to go above and beyond in their employment. Engaged employees are more present in the workplace and show an effort to help out. Moderately engaged employees are physically present but put minimal effort towards accomplishing the job. Disengaged employees are disinterested in their jobs and may be actively working against their coworkers. For comparison purposes, according to nationwide Gallup polling data, about 30 percent of employees are highly engaged or engaged, 50 percent are moderately engaged, and 20 percent are disengaged.

The SEE results include descriptions of the agency’s strengths and areas of concern. The scoring is based on a scale of 100 to 500. Scores that typically range from 300 to 400 with a score of 350 serving as a “tipping point” between positive and negative perceptions. For FY 2020 the DFPS SEE results reported the following strengths and weaknesses:

Areas of Strength

- **Supervision Score: 416, an increase from 406 in FY 2018** - The supervision construct captures employees’ perceptions of the nature of supervisory relationships within the organization. Higher scores suggest that employees view their supervisors as fair, helpful, and critical to the flow of work.
- **Employee Engagement Score: 401, an increase from 394 in FY 2018** - The employee engagement construct captures the degree to which employees are willing to go above and beyond, feel committed to the organization and are present working. Higher scores suggest that employees feel their ideas count, their work impacts the organization, and their well-being and development are valued.
- **Workgroup Score: 408, an increase from 400 in FY 2018** - The workgroup construct captures employees’ perceptions of the people they work with on a daily basis and how effective they are. This construct measures the degree to which employees view their workgroup as effective, cohesive, and open to the opinions of all members.

Areas of Concern

- **Pay Score: 256, a decrease from 257 in FY 2018** - The pay construct captures employees' perceptions about how well the compensation package offered by the organization holds up when compared to similar jobs in other organizations. Lower scores suggest that pay is a central concern or reason for discontent and is not comparable to similar organizations.
- **Job Satisfaction Score: 357, an increase from 352 in FY 2018** - The job satisfaction construct captures employees' perceptions about the overall work situation and ability to maintain work-life balance. Lower scores suggest that employees feel overworked, unable to perform at their best and unhappy with their work.
- **Internal Communication Score: 379, an increase from 373 in FY 2018** - The internal communication construct captures employees' perceptions of whether communication in the organization is reasonable, candid and helpful. Lower scores suggest that employees feel information does not arrive in a timely fashion and is difficult to find.

DFPS has participated in the Survey of Employee Engagement (SEE) for many years. Accordingly, we have the benefit of trend data from these many past surveys. Based on the survey data, we have identified issues that justify intervention. For example, we have seen that participation rates and DFPS's response rates have fallen over the past several iterations of the survey. Survey research teaches that this is a strong indicator of poor employee engagement. From the survey responses, half of the employees who have participated expressed concern that leadership would not do anything with their input. One out of three employees were not satisfied with the level of trust in the workplace, and one out four felt disconnected. Disappointedly, 30 percent of employees were not proud of where they work.

To address the concerning data, a series of intervention steps are now being proposed. The proposed work is with the Institute for Organizational Excellence (IOE). This group within UT Austin conducts the SEE and is experienced in serving as an external, objective, and knowledgeable consultant for employee engagement strategies and has proposed an engagement process for DFPS. In summary, the goal of the proposed work is to increase employee engagement by implementing various strategies to improve employee retention, increase leadership accountability at the local level, promote a positive overall organizational culture, and sustain the agency by it being viewed as an employer of choice.

Summarized are the five components proposed to be deployed agency-wide over eight months across the entire agency.

1. Educational sessions for local leadership and staff would be conducted to promote the importance of employee engagement, teaching how benefits will result from employee engagement, and facilitating the most effective ways to keep the workforce engaged. Emphasis will be placed on engagement's relationship to retention, productively, commitment, and creating an "employer of choice" organizational culture.
2. Multiple communication touchpoints between local leadership and staff will be developed to promote engagement efforts and build trust. Improving connection is more important than ever, as more of the workforce is working remotely to maintain a sense of mission and purpose.
3. Local accountability to prepare meaningful engagement strategies will be facilitated, technical assistance given, and participation with the initiative measured and quantified.

4. Assistance will be provided in facilitating intervention strategies depending on the needs of the various units. Customizable intervention strategies may include focus groups, action planning, targeted conversations, pulse surveys, or other work group activities.
5. A rigorous evaluation consisting of comparable benchmarks across programs with pre/post-test metrics and participation levels will be coupled with descriptive best practices and leadership lessons for use.

The Institute for Organizational Excellence (IOE) is refining recommendation and next steps for local areas and returning those to leadership.

In September 2021, the IOE is also compiling recommendations and identify common themes identify across programs and regions and preparing a report of all efforts to DFPS. The IOE also would like to conduct a post-test (similar to the pre-test) to see if these efforts may have impacted individuals' perceptions of their levels of engagement.

HUMAN RESOURCE DIVISION

Per House Bill 5, 85th Regular Session, 2017, DFPS consolidated workforce management functions and adopted additional critical functions to better support employees. In 2017, DFPS created the Human Resources Division, which consists of the Human Resources Administration Office, Talent Acquisition Group, Employee Wellness, Human Resource Records and Reporting, Position Classification, Workers Compensation, Employee Criminal Background Checks, Organizational and Leadership Development, and Veteran's Liaison functions under one division. Human Resources Division serves as a single "store front" by emphasizing consistency, communication, outreach, accessibility, and coordination with staff at all levels of the agency. In keeping with the intent of Rider 8, Human Resources Division coordinates multiple targeted HR initiatives to continue building on the significant improvements made in turnover and retention. This customer focused approach is reflected through multiple ongoing activities within the division including:

- "HR Matters" Newsletter – provides supervisors and leadership in DFPS with a regular Human Resources (HR) communication containing relevant and timely information intended to bring consistency to HR operation within each level of the organization.
- "HR Bulletin" – provides supervisors and leadership with critical and time sensitive information related to HR policies and procedures.
- "HR After-Hours" Program - provides all employees with direct HR support one evening per week to assist in addressing the needs of our 24-hour workforce.
- Independent Human Resources Manual – HR leads the HR policy workgroup, which is composed of representatives from all DFPS departments and programs. The workgroup consults on suggested changes to HR policy in order address DFPS's unique needs.
- Management Reviews - When program management identifies employee-related issues or concerns, HR staff may travel to the location and interview staff in order to assess any underlying or ongoing concerns. A report of findings and recommendations is submitted to the appropriate executive management for consideration and appropriate action.
- Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) - The DFPS HR office has invested resources into training nine employee relations specialists in conducting mediation and facilitations. When HR or Program Management identifies concerns, HR staff can travel to the location and conduct employment mediation or a facilitated conversation in order to address the issues at the local level.

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- Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) Group - In order to help employees and supervisors focus on the agencies mission, vision, and values, in 2019, the HR office partnered with the CPI Division to develop a pilot an FMLA group. This group shifts the burden of monitoring and tracking the federal FMLA requirements for Charging Party Investigative staff away from program and to HR. This initiative frees first level managers and supervisors of the burdens of FMLA allowing them to focus on protecting Texans. In 2020 the initiative grew to include two catchment areas of the CPS Division. In late 2021 HR will expand the program to provide the same service for all CPS employees and supervisors within CPS and the Statewide Intake Division.
- Training Development - The HR office has developed and delivered prescriptive HR training to help ensure compliance applicable HR policy and statutes.
- Employee Wellness Benefits and Activities - The DFPS wellness program coordinates wellness activities and events including individual employee services, counseling, critical incident stress debriefings, and secondary traumatic support sessions to promote a healthy work/life balance. In 2020 and 2021, DFPS faced multiple internal and external challenges in which the wellness program has worked hard to meet the needs of employees by providing much needed virtual programming that was designed to support employee's mental health and physical wellbeing. The wellness program offered virtual wellness fairs, fitness classes, challenges and support sessions. Despite the resources being offered, the level of engagement is low. According to our Health Plans data, the top health conditions are back and joint pain, hypertension, and mental health. All of the programs being made available are offered to help reduce the chronic conditions that are linked to health behavior to include stress, nutrition, physical activity and sleep. The wellness program continues to partner with wellness vendors under the Employees Retirement System to provide health and wellness programs at no cost.
- Veteran's Liaison - The veteran's liaison position is focused on the recruitment and retention of veterans in order to meet the Governor's benchmarks related to veteran's employment. DFPS has continues the partnership with the Texas Veteran's Commission to implement the Service Member Recruiting, Retention and Training (SMRRT) internship program. The goal is to provide transitioning service members with professional training and hands-on experience in the civilian workforce with the option to extend an official employment offer with DFPS immediately following the completion of the program. Because of this and other efforts in this area DFPS was a national finalist for the Office of the Secretary of Defense's, Employers of State Guard and Reserve Freedom Award for going beyond workplace requirements to encourage a culture of support of Guard and Reserve members.

Supervisor Assessments

The primary goal of the Agency Supervisor Assessment Process is to enhance the current CPS supervisor screening process to ensure the most qualified staff are selected to fill these critical supervisor positions in our agency. Testing staff will ensure the program selects those who are best prepared and are able to demonstrate their skills and abilities that are required to operate at the supervisor level. Below are several dates and key finding for the Supervisor Assessment process:

- Started administering for CPS and CPI supervisor candidates in May 2017.
- Proctored monthly in each of 15 locations around the state.
- As of August 2021, 1,553 employees completed the supervisor exam with an 89 percent pass rate.

- 13 percent of CPS workers with 18-month length of service (LOS) have taken the exam.
- Statewide, 11 percent of CPS workers with 18 months length of service passed the exam.
- The average score of all CPS test attempts is 84.
- Minimal cost impact as administration, proctor duties, and logistics are absorbed by current HR and operations staff.
- Assessments began for APS and SWI supervisors in the summer of 2018.
 - APS has 29 assessments completed with an average score of 78.
 - SWI has 19 assessments completed with an average score of 72.

Cross Program Hiring Boards

The purpose of Cross Program Hiring Boards is to increase rigor and objectivity in the interview and selection process of CPS, APS, SWI, and CPI supervisor applicants. The new process will provide more consistency in the hiring of supervisors across all programs. Since the assessment will be screening more of the knowledge, skills, and abilities listed for each position, the focus of the interview process will be around professional fit and leadership qualities of the candidates. Below are a few dates and key findings regarding the Cross Program Hiring Boards process:

- Requirement for the revised hiring board process began November 1, 2017 for CPS, APS, SWI, and CPI.
- Hiring boards are made up of cross program representation, including hiring specialists, to ensure a diverse evaluation of the candidates.
- Monitoring of the process is ongoing and board information is collected to verify adherence to the process. As of August 31, 2021, six-hundred and sixty-seven (667) hiring boards have been conducted.
- The vendor that processes supervisor selections ensures that hiring managers provide the assessment results prior to approving the offer.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: TURNOVER- Q3 FY 2021

Figure 1: SUMMARY OF EMPLOYEE TURNOVER COMPARISON REPORT (as of Q3 FY21)⁴

Functional Title	Turnover Rate (FY15)	Turnover Rate (FY16)	Turnover Rate (FY17)	Turnover Rate (FY18)	Turnover Rate (FY19)	Turnover Rate (FY20)	Turnover Rate (FY21)	% Change FY20 to FY21 YTD
All Employees	19.6%	19.3%	16.2%	17.8%	19.3%	18.5%	21.8%	17.7%
CPS Workers	25.8%	25.4%	18.4%	20.2%	17.3%	20.7%	18.5%	-10.5%
CPS Supervisors	9.5%	10.4%	7.1%	6.8%	7.9%	9.2%	7.8%	-15.0%
CPS Program	20.5%	20.4%	15.6%	17.4%	16.1%	18.4%	17.3%	-5.8%
CPS CVS Caseworker	22.6%	22.6%	16.5%	17.4%	17.1%	24.7%	21.9%	-11.6%
CPS CVS Supervisor	8.3%	8.4%	3.2%	4.3%	7.7%	10.2%	6.3%	-38.0%
CPS CVS Program	19.3%	18.6%	14.6%	15.6%	16.6%	23.1%	20.9%	-9.4%
CPS FBSS Caseworker	27.9%	25.0%	16.0%	19.9%	23.3%	18.6%	20.4%	10.2%
CPS FBSS Supervisor	3.9%	10.2%	6.0%	9.8%	9.1%	7.1%	8.4%	19.2%
CPS FBSS Program	23.1%	21.2%	14.3%	17.9%	20.8%	16.1%	19.2%	19.5%
CPS OTH Caseworker	8.2%	7.8%	5.1%	5.7%	7.7%	9.9%	3.3%	-66.5%
CPS OTH Supervisor	7.0%	10.2%	9.9%	1.3%	6.6%	9.4%	13.3%	40.8%
CPS OTH Program	8.1%	9.1%	7.7%	8.8%	9.9%	9.7%	7.0%	-28.2%
CPS SI Investigator	18.0%	19.2%	9.1%	12.1%	13.2%	8.0%	18.7%	135.0%
CPI Workers							39.5%	39.5%
CPI Workers (Non SI)	32.7%	32.9%	24.9%	27.1%	31.9%	28.8%	41.6%	44.4%
CPI Supervisors	13.0%	12.1%	9.5%	8.7%	8.5%	10.3%	13.6%	31.6%
CPI Program	26.5%	27.3%	20.7%	21.7%	25.1%	22.3%	33.5%	50.4%
DCI Workers	25.1%	20.2%	20.6%	29.9%	24.8%	18.2%	43.6%	139.6%
DCI Supervisors	7.1%	13.0%	6.6%	0.0%	16.7%	17.4%	22.2%	27.8%
DCI Program	19.6%	17.3%	17.7%	21.8%	19.0%	20.3%	29.9%	46.9%
RCI Workers	16.1%	14.1%	19.9%	19.5%	29.8%	28.8%	23.0%	-20.1%
RCI Supervisors	12.9%	6.6%	3.2%	41.0%	10.3%	0.0%	19.5%	19.5%
RCI Program	14.2%	11.4%	16.2%	27.9%	24.7%	21.6%	24.6%	13.9%
APS Workers	23.4%	21.2%	25.9%	25.2%	20.7%	17.9%	22.3%	24.5%
APS Supervisors	13.4%	7.2%	2.7%	18.4%	7.2%	1.2%	11.2%	818.4%
APS Program	19.8%	18.7%	20.8%	21.9%	17.5%	15.2%	20.0%	30.9%
SWI Workers	19.1%	19.4%	15.9%	16.4%	16.8%	7.2%	8.1%	13.0%
SWI Supervisors	8.2%	10.9%	11.3%	0.0%	5.5%	2.7%	6.1%	122.7%
SWI Program	16.1%	16.9%	14.7%	13.6%	14.7%	6.8%	7.9%	16.1%

⁴ Turnover is calculated using a method that mirrors the process the SAO uses. Specifically: Total number of Terminations of Regular Employees/Count of Average Active Regular Employees.

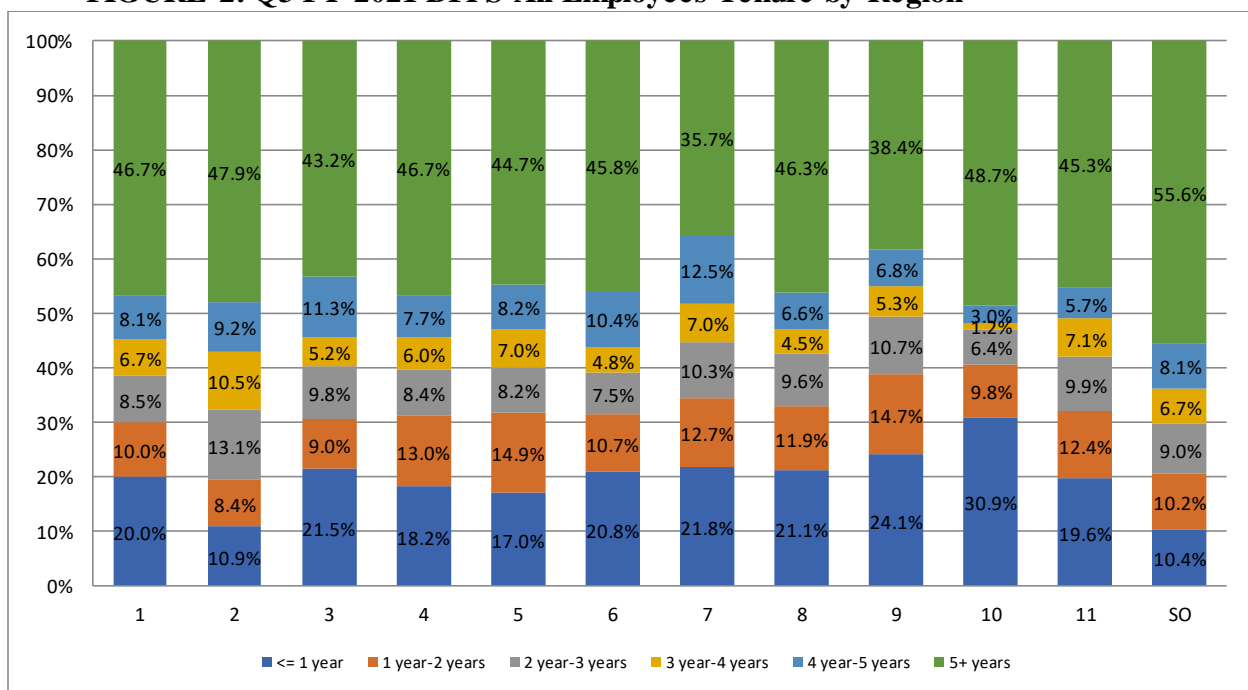
The CPS specialist I position was reintroduced in FY 2014, and CPS and CPI program specialist caseworkers were introduced in FY 2017. Prior to introduction or reintroduction, null records will be represented by shaded cells.

Prior to FY 2018, CPI staff were assigned to CPS Investigations units. Unit designation was determined by the staff's Department ID at the conclusion of the reporting period.

Prior to FY 2019, this report was referred to as Rider 11. Currently, the report is not a part of any rider. Older reports did not include separate data for different types of CPS caseworkers and included CPI numbers among the CPS results.

APPENDIX B: TENURE- Q3 FY 2021⁵

FIGURE 2: Q3 FY 2021 DFPS All Employees Tenure by Region*



*State Office (SO) houses limited direct delivery staff.

Tenure grouping is used to monitor the proportion of workers in each region based off being case assignable and is based off the LBB reporting requirements. For direct-delivery staff in CPS CVS, CPS FBSS, APS, RCCI, and DCI:

- Not case assignable is a tenure of less than 105 days.
- Partially case assignable is a tenure of 105 days to 135 days.
- Fully case assignable is a tenure of more than 135 days.
- Tenured refers to caseworkers with 2 or more years of state service.

For direct-delivery staff in CPI:

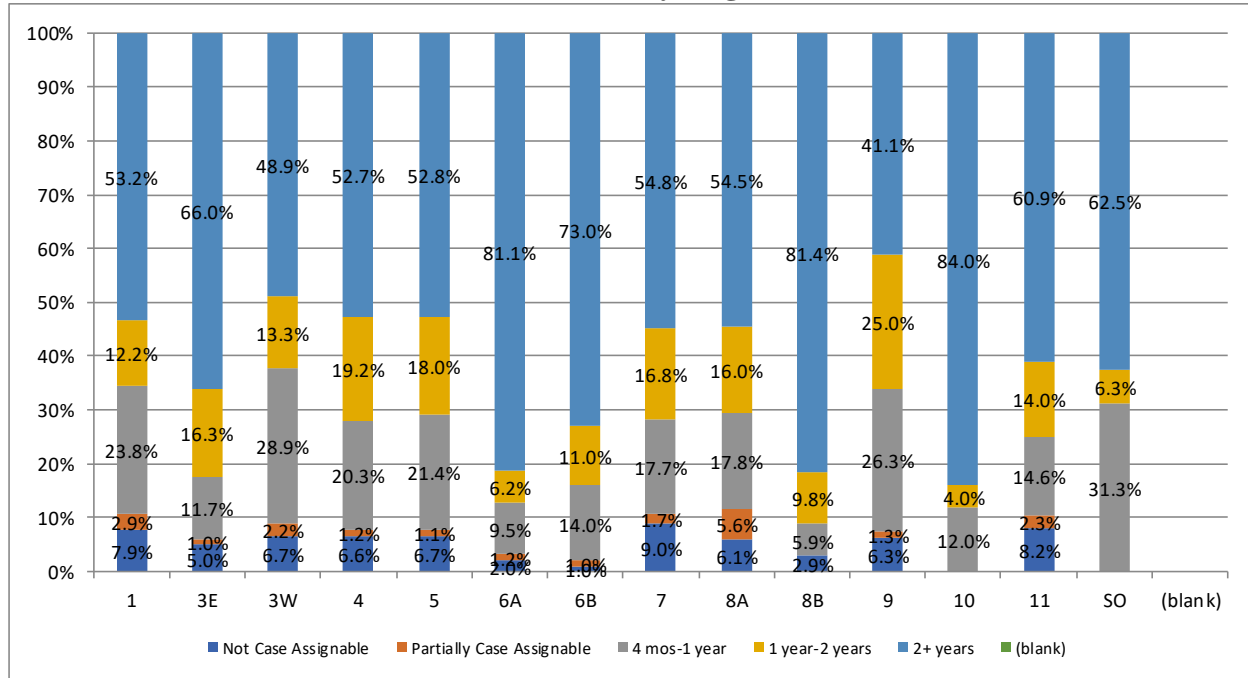
- Not case assignable is a tenure of less than 98 days.
- Partially case assignable is a tenure of 98 days to 128 days.

⁵ All tenure data as of November 2021.

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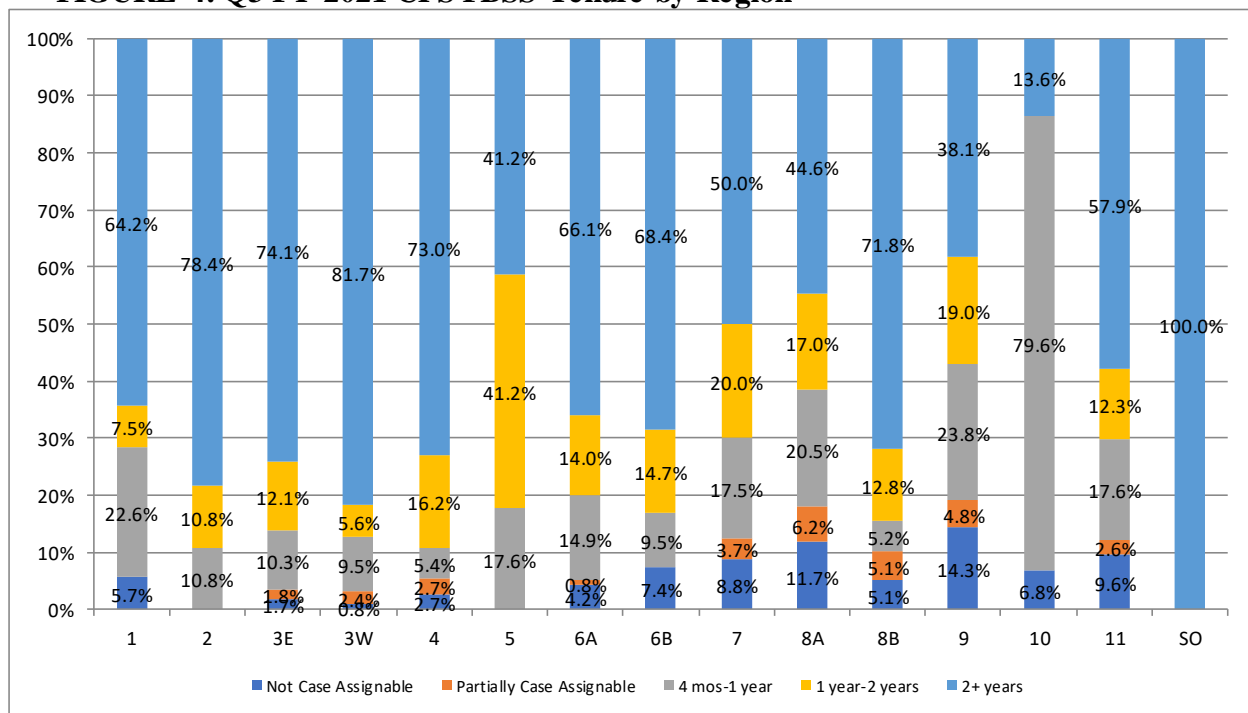
- Fully case assignable is a tenure of more than 128 days.
- Tenured refers to caseworkers with 2 or more years of state service.

FIGURE 3: Q3 FY 2021 CPS CVS Tenure by Region*



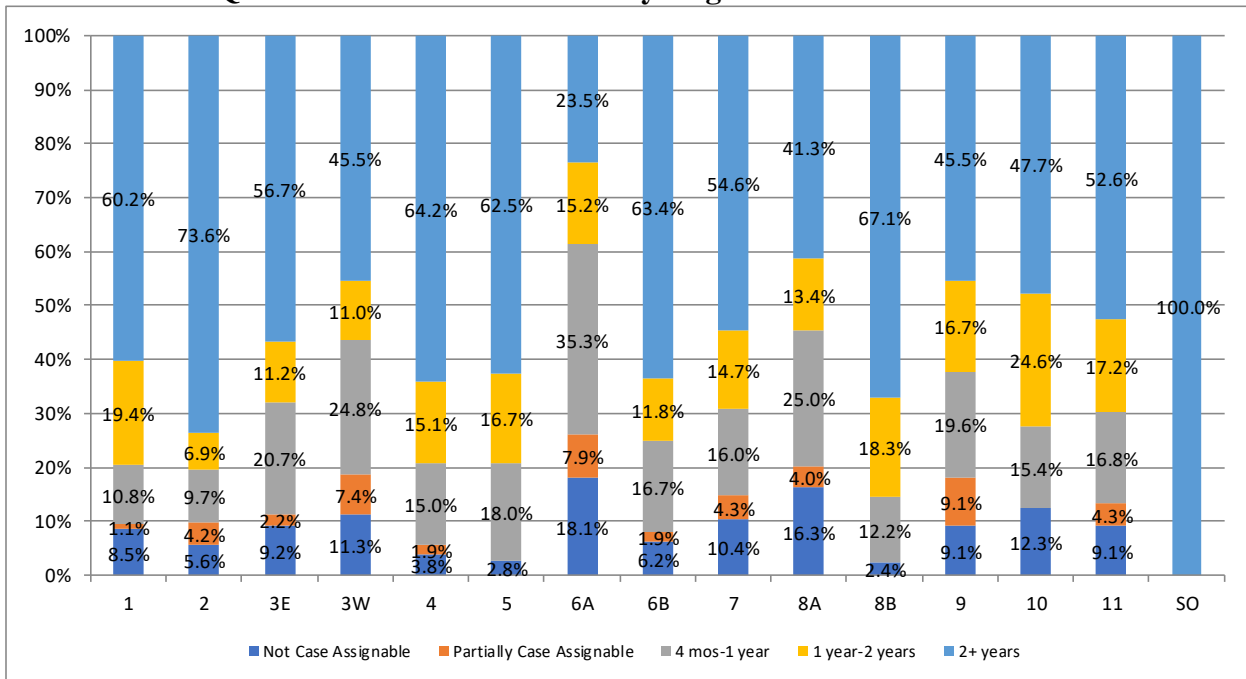
*State Office (SO) houses limited direct delivery staff.

FIGURE 4: Q3 FY 2021 CPS FBSS Tenure by Region*



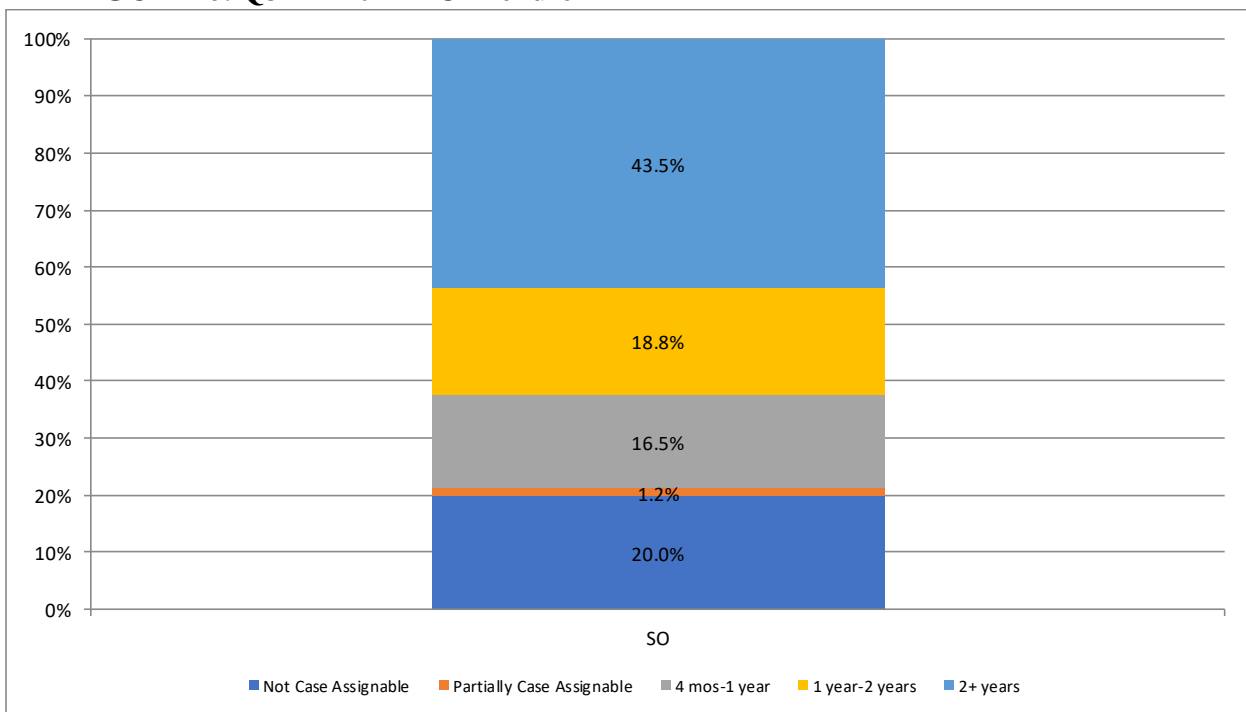
*State Office (SO) houses limited direct delivery staff.

FIGURE 5: Q3 FY 2021 CPI INV Tenure by Region*



*State Office (SO) houses limited direct delivery staff.

FIGURE 6: Q3 FY 2021 RCI Tenure*



*While these staff report to State Office, they are housed around the state.

FIGURE 7: Q3 FY 2021 DCI Tenure

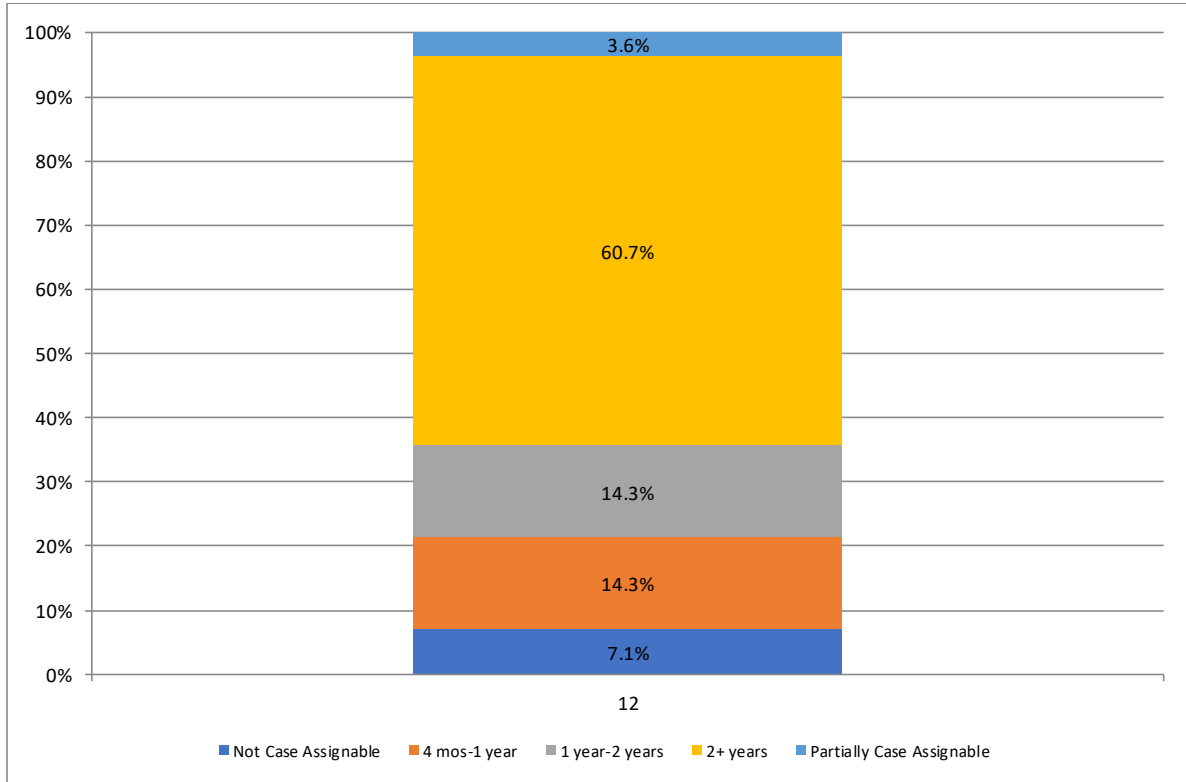


FIGURE 8: Q3 FY 2021 APS In-Home Tenure by Region

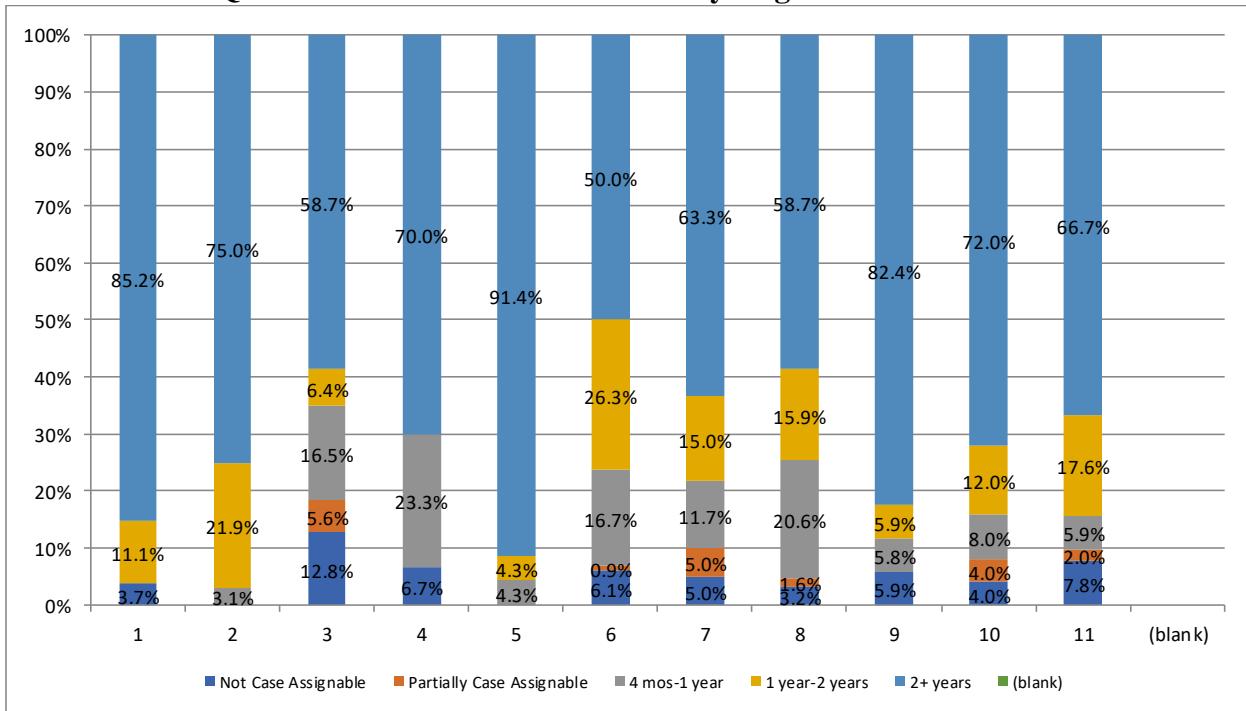
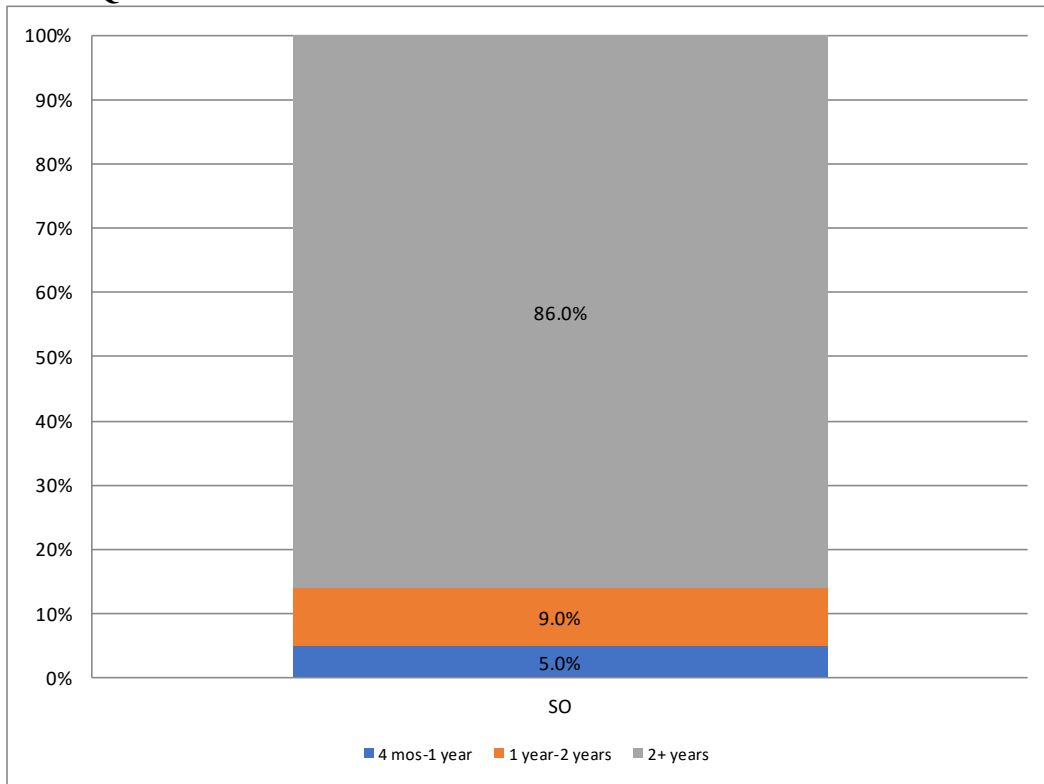


FIGURE 9: Q3 FY 2021 SWI Tenure



*While these staff report to State Office, they are housed around the state.

APPENDIX C: INITIATIVES SUMMARY

Target Strategy	Initiative Name	Impacted Area(s)	Status March 2020
Concerns with Working Environment	Anniversary Notices	All Programs	Fully Implemented
Concerns with Working Environment	APS Professional Development Training Model (Basic Skills Development)	APS	Fully Implemented
Concerns with Working Environment	APS Welcome Notices	APS	Fully Implemented
Concerns with Working Environment	Automate Reference Checks for Vendor-Screened Positions	All Programs	Fully Implemented
Concerns with Working Environment	Child Care Licensing (CCL) Newsletter	CCL	Fully Implemented
Concerns with Working Environment	Collecting Confidential Internal Complaints	All Programs	Fully Implemented
Concerns with Working Environment	Commissioner’s Proud to Protect Staff Recognition Ceremony	All Programs	Fully Implemented
Concerns with Working Environment	Consolidate Workforce Management Functions	All Programs	Fully Implemented
Concerns with Working Environment	CPS Professional Development Training Model (CPD)	CPS	Fully Implemented
Concerns with Working Environment	Create an Educational Pathway for non-Title IV-E Employees	All Programs	Fully Implemented
Concerns with Working Environment	Develop Policy on Level Reminders	All Programs	Fully Implemented
Concerns with Working Environment	Enhance Worker Safety Caution features in IMPACT	All Programs	Fully Implemented

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Target Strategy	Initiative Name	Impacted Area(s)	Status March 2020
Concerns with Working Environment	Expand SafeSignal Statewide	All Programs	Fully Implemented
Concerns with Working Environment	Frontline Staff and Supervisor Trainings	All Programs	Fully Implemented
Concerns with Working Environment	Hiring applicants holding less than a four-year degree as CPS caseworkers	CPS	Fully Implemented
Concerns with Working Environment	Other SWI Trainings	SWI	Fully Implemented
Concerns with Working Environment	PEI Meetings and Work Retreat	PEI	Fully Implemented
Concerns with Working Environment	Regional and Local Staff Recognition	All Programs	Fully Implemented
Concerns with Working Environment	Statewide Intake (SWI) Support	SWI	Fully Implemented
Concerns with Working Environment	SWI Professional Development Training Model (Basic Skills Development)	SWI	Fully Implemented
Concerns with Working Environment	Update CPS Supervisor Basic Skills Development (BSD)	CPS	Fully Implemented
Concerns with Working Environment	C.A.R.E. Support Program	All Programs	Fully Implemented
Concerns with Working Environment	Expand Worker Safety Support & Training	All Programs	Fully Implemented
Concerns with Working Environment	PEI Restructure	PEI	Fully Implemented
Concerns with Working Environment	Promoting CPS Communication and Input	CPS	Fully Implemented

Target Strategy	Initiative Name	Impacted Area(s)	Status March 2020
Concerns with Working Environment	360 Leadership Assessments for Agency Leaders	All Programs	Fully Implemented
Concerns with Working Environment	Develop Stage-Specific Caseworker Interview Questions	All Programs	Fully Implemented
Concerns with Working Environment	Expand Employee Wellness Benefits and Activities	All Programs	Fully Implemented
Concerns with Working Environment	Performance Evaluations	All Programs	Fully Implemented
Concerns with Compensation	Awarding Merit Pay	All Programs	Fully Implemented
Concerns with Compensation	CPS Investigative Pay	CPS	Fully Implemented
Concerns with Compensation	Locality Pay	All Programs	Discontinued ⁷
Concerns with Compensation	Mentoring Stipend	CPS, CPI and APS	Fully Implemented

⁷ Locality Pay was discontinued in early FY 2020 and the additional compensation was consolidated in the subject employee’s base salary.