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

87th Legislature, Regular Session Bi-Annual Report

Human Resources Management Plan

FY 2022

First Quarter

March 2022

Table of Contents

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 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 states 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 2021 and it remains higher than the SAO statewide average for all agencies. Continued progress in implementing HRMP initiatives serves as evidence of the full commitment of executive leadership to ensure 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 2022) is complete through the end of the first quarter (Q1) due to limits on the availability of finalized data before the reporting deadline of February 2022. Turnover through Q1 FY 2022 is compared to the turnover rate of the previous full fiscal year. 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.

The statewide turnover rate for fiscal year 2021 was 22.5 percent for all state agencies including interagency transfers. In FY 2022 Q1, DFPS averaged 13,365 employees with a turnover rate of 30.2 percent.

DFPS Turnover and Retention Findings

- DFPS has reported a 27 percent increase in turnover agency-wide from 23.8 percent in FY 2021 to 30.2 percent in Q1 FY 2022.
- On average, for the first quarter of FY 2022, 45 percent of all DFPS employees have five or more years of tenure with the agency.

Child Protective Services (CPS) Turnover and Retention Findings[1]

- Q1 FY 2022 CPS caseworker turnover of 27 percent is over the SB 1 performance measure for caseworker turnover of 25.5 percent.
- Q1 FY 2022 turnover for CPS workers has:
  - Increased 43.3 percent since FY 2021 for Conservatorship (CVS) caseworkers (FY 2021[2] at 24.6 percent to Q1 FY 2022 35.2 percent).
  - Decreased 22.2 percent since FY 2021 for Family-Based Safety Services (FBSS) caseworkers (FY 2021 at 21.3 percent to Q1 FY 2022 at 16.6 percent).
- Q1 FY 2022 turnover for CPS supervisors has increased 49.4 percent (FY 2021 at 7.1 percent to Q1 FY 2022 at 10.7 percent).
- Q1 FY 2022 turnover for the CPS program increased 38.4 percent (FY 2021 at 19.8 percent to Q1 FY 2022 at 27.4 percent).
- On average for Q1 FY 2022, approximately 56 percent of the CVS workers and 66 percent of FBSS workers have at least two years of tenure.

Child Protective Investigations (CPI) Turnover and Retention Findings[3]

- Q1 FY 2022 CPI worker turnover of 47.3 percent exceeds the SB1 performance measure for worker turnover of 25.5 percent.
- Q1 FY 2022 turnover for CPI workers has:
  - Increased 9.3 percent since FY 2021 for Investigations (INV) caseworkers (FY 2021 at 43.2 percent to Q1 FY 2022 at 47.3 percent).
  - Decreased 11.7 percent since FY 2021 for Special Investigators (SI) caseworkers (FY 2021 at 17.1 percent to Q1 FY 2022 at 15.1 percent).
  - Increased 66.6 percent since FY 2021 for Residential Child Investigations (RCI) caseworkers (FY 2021 at 26.4 percent to Q1 FY 2022 at 44.4 percent).
  - Decreased 25.6 percent since FY 2021 for Daycare Investigations (DCI) caseworkers (FY 2021 at 48.9 percent to Q1 FY 2022 at 36.4 percent).
- Q1 FY 2022 turnover for CPI supervisors has decreased 11.4 percent (FY 2021 at 14.6 percent to Q1 FY 2022 at 13.0 percent).

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[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.

- Q1 FY 2022 turnover for the CPI program increased 15 percent (FY 2021 at 34.9 percent to Q1 FY 2022 at 40.1 percent).
- On average for Q1 FY 2022, approximately 53 percent of INV workers have two or more years of tenure.

Adult Protective Services (APS) Turnover and Retention Findings

- Q1 FY 2022 APS worker turnover of 31.9 percent is above the SB1 performance measure for APS caseworker turnover of 20 percent.
- Q1 FY 2022 turnover for APS workers of 31.9 percent has increased 27.1 percent since FY 2021, when it was 25.1 percent.
- Q1 FY 2022 turnover for APS supervisors has increased 52.3 percent (FY 2021 at 9.6 percent to Q1 FY 2022 at 14.6 percent).
- Q1 FY 2022 turnover for the APS program increased 30.2 percent (FY 2021 at 21.9 percent to Q1 FY 2022 3 at 28.5 percent).
- Q1 FY 2022, 71 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.
- Q1 FY 2022 turnover for SWI workers has increased 45.5 percent since FY 2021 (FY 2021 at 10.9 percent to Q1 FY 2022 at 15.9 percent).
- Q1 FY 2022 turnover for SWI supervisors has decreased 4.5 percent since FY 2021 (FY 2021 at 4.5 percent to Q1 FY 2022 at 0 percent).
- Q1 FY 2022 turnover for the SWI program increased 38.1 percent (FY 2021 at 9.7 percent to Q1 FY 2022 at 13.4 percent).
- On average for Q1 FY 2022, 90 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 2022, 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.
- Continued use of 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 meetings with their staff.
- CPI regional leadership meet 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 creates overall sustainability of the institute. The Adaptive Coaching model supports the growth and enhancement of supervisor leadership skills.
- Continue to conduct quarterly regional and statewide training councils to elicit feedback and make improvements to trainings for staff and leadership development, as well as retention.
- Implemented in 2021, the CPI Professional Development training model for new staff focuses on enhancing staff development to ensure staff are equipped with the necessary knowledge and tools to effectively complete required job tasks. 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.
- Monthly "Talk Training to Us" sessions for staff and leadership to share training needs and started a Leadership Book Club throughout the state of Texas.
- CPI program specialists held monthly informative presentations on legislative updates, policy changes, and new protocol initiatives for CPI field staff. They also supported the regional field staff by assisting with mentoring, case consultations, training, and staffing investigations.
- The Mental Health Specialists have conducted regional field trainings on skill enhancements for adolescent and teen mental health issues/concerns.
- 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 to build internal relationships to offset turnover and increase workforce stability.
- The Master Investigation program has worked in all regions across the state, working investigations, providing mentorship, and training to CPI.
- CPI is implementing a Peer Support Group to encourage members to share their own lived experiences and practical guidance to help their peers develop their own goals and strategies for self-empowerment, and to take concrete steps towards building fulfilling, self-determined, lives for themselves while balancing their work and personal life.
- Currently providing 'The Leadership Challenge' to all Program Directors and above, which is based on an evidence-based approach designed to help leaders observe and learn their best skills and abilities to effectively lead within the organization through increased communication with an emphasis on retention.
- CPI hosted a Program Director Conference focused on 'Commitment to Leadership,' which provided multiple workshops designed to enhance supervisory and leadership skills.

The APS program continues to address retention in FY 2022:

- APS continues to deal with the ever- changing global pandemic and surges in the various variants.
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is still being provided to APS field staff.
- The caseworker mentor program continues to provide support to new APS specialists.
    - The mentor program is experiencing stressors due to increasing turnover. This includes mentors who are stressed by the constant need for pairing with new proteges.
- The supervisor mentor program continues to provide support through a mentor supervisor for new supervisors as well as tenured supervisors who need additional support.
- APS and CLOE are assessing the training process and needs for newly hired caseworkers. This effort is focused on training topics such as critical thinking skills, time management, field readiness, and contribution to field work in a sensible and chronological systematic approach.
- APS is temporarily paying overtime (OT) each month for staff who assist in areas that are understaffed and are in critical need due to large caseloads. Paying OT on a monthly basis is a needed incentive to encourage staff who are going above and beyond to serve our clients.
- APS is utilizing Administration for Community Living (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 current and anticipated turnover. When we keep a stable workforce, we find that our turnover is reduced. However, we must stay ahead of turnover because it is a minimum of six (6) months before a new hire is fully trained, case assignable, and productive.
- APS is providing one-time merits to meritorious staff through ACL grant funds through FY22.
- APS is developing three (3) pilot exploitation (EXPL) units funded by the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) and include; one (1) supervisor II, six (6) APS caseworker Vs, one (1) administrative technician II, and one (1) evidence driven investigation subject matter expert (EDI SME). These three (3) units will work closely with local District Attorney offices and law enforcement and perform advanced financial exploitation investigations. The pilot units will relieve other caseworkers of these cumbersome and lengthy cases allowing them to focus on investigations and service delivery in non-exploitation cases. This will also allow these specialized investigators to focus and utilize forensic investigative skills with hopes of prosecution and restitution through the judicial system.

The SWI program also implemented multiple initiatives in FY 2022 including:

- The ability to telework continues to be a key component to retention as evidenced in SWI's internal retention survey. Considering how well SWI maintained continuity of

operations with full time telework during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, SWI policy currently extends telework opportunities to all qualified employees.
- The combination of increased teleworking opportunities with the ability to conduct BSD in a virtual environment allows SWI to become a true statewide program. Starting in the January 2022 BSD class, SWI began accepting applications from candidates all over the state. This included new hires from Texarkana, El Paso, and Corpus Christi. SWI leadership believes this statewide approach to hiring will aid in keeping SWI's vacancy rate to a minimal level.
- In January 2022, SWI created a new career path for its Administrative professionals. Since administrative staff have experience navigating the IMPACT system and call out high stakes reports to on-call field staff, SWI waived all degree/college coursework requirements for these staff who have spent two years with SWI as an administrative staff member. This has not only set up a career path for a subset of employees who had previously reached a career ceiling, it gives SWI more flexibility in ensuring all of its intake specialist positions are filled with capable employees.
- Through feedback received from SWI's ongoing retention teams, in January 2022, SWI made a clarification to internal policies around staff who have just experienced difficult phone calls. This clarification gives staff some time to gather themselves and ensure their own wellness before returning to phone duties. SWI retention groups are also working on a project to engage intake specialists in all areas of SWI so that they have a better understanding of how the processes of the entire organization work as a whole.

The CPS program also implemented multiple initiatives in FY 2022 including:

- CPS Regional Leadership continues to meet quarterly with their Regional System's Improvement staff to review and evaluate business plan metrics, and adjust strategies for improvements throughout the fiscal year.
- The Director of Field meets quarterly, face-to-face, with the Regional Directors across the state to strategize and work on business plan outcomes, retention, and caseloads.
- Regional Directors continue to meet with caseworkers and supervisory level staff to get a pulse on the regional stressors. They use these meetings to work with their leadership on addressing any concerns and worries. Many of the regional changes that happen come from the ideas that the caseworkers and supervisors give during these meetings.
- CPS has added six (6) Mentor Program Specialists (formerly Field Training Supervisors). These six (6) specialists transitioned to CPS from the Center for Learning and Organizational Excellence (CLOE), and there were also two (2) Mentor Program Specialists that were hired. This has given the CPS program eight (8) total support mentoring positions to help with development and retention. Since having the staff in place, the following has occurred:
  - o The Mentor Handbook has been revised and replaced with a Mentoring Resource Guide.
  - o Staff have worked diligently to ensure all protégés are paired with a mentor during their first few weeks of training.

- o Mentors have been provided with more support and recognition, to include additional training, individualized CPS mentor badges, and the development of a lead mentor program.
- CPS has added training to better support staff when working with youth. Also, training for Motivational Interviewing was offered to all staff members across the state.
- CPS hired seven (7) Quality Assurance Specialists to support field staff in meeting and maintaining compliance with Foster Care Litigation Remedial Orders.
- A leadership conference is being planned for August 2022; the agenda will include leadership plan to support staff who are experiencing secondhand trauma and post pandemic work issues.
- De-escalation training is also being procured to further equip CPS staff who work and interact with our youth and families.

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 2021 to Q1 FY 2022 Hiring Funnel

Stage of Hiring Process	Number of Applicants
Applied	~276,000
Met Initial Screening Criteria	~222,000
Referred for Further Screening	~190,000
Interviewed	~40,000
Hired	~5,100

As reported in Table 1 above, of the 276,000 direct-delivery applications received from FY 2021 to the first quarter of FY 2022, approximately 222,000 (80 percent) met initial screening criteria. Of those, about 190,000 (86 percent) also completed the required competency assessment and moved forward in the hiring process. An estimated 40,000 were interviewed and 5,100 were hired between FY 2021 and Q1 FY 2022. 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: Q1 of FY 2022 Fill Rates

Program	Fill Rate
APS	~92%
CPS	~92%
CPI	~90%
SWI	~90%

Each program experienced more turnover this year as compared to other fiscal years. Contributing factors are post and current pandemic workforce, Children Without Placements work, and continued work stress. Also, starting June 15th, 2021, all new employees had to be fingerprinted, which increased the amount of time an employee had to clear due diligence in order to be hired. This delayed the hiring and selection process in most instances by weeks for a caseworker hire.

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 Q1 FY 2022 SAO survey response rate was 15.8 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 also indicated that retirement and, "Personal or family health" are amongst 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 Q1 FY 2022, the response rate for voluntary separations was 33.3 percent and the response rate for involuntary separations was 10.0 percent. The four reasons listed most by employees that separated voluntarily were work related stress, accepted another job, work safety concerns, and lack of communication. The top four concerns listed by employees whose separation was involuntary were that DFPS didn't help them fulfill their career goals, management didn't encourage their feedback and suggestions, that staff didn't feel supported by their supervisor, and that they didn't receive adequate and constructive feedback about their performance. 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 Q1 FY 2022	DFPS Exit Survey Q1 FY 2022 Voluntary	DFPS Exit Survey Q1 FY 2022 Involuntary
Response Rate	15.8%	33.3%	10.0%
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	• Poor working conditions/environment • Retirement • Personal or family health	• Work related stress • Accepted another job • Work safety concerns • Lack of communication	• DFPS didn't help them fulfill their career goals • 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

*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 agency will be conducting a new survey for which the results will be published in next Rider 8 Report.

DFPS has participated in the Survey of Employee Engagement (SEE) for many years. Accordingly, we have the benefit of trend data from these 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 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.

These top five recommendations were derived from SEE data, focus group conversations, focus group survey results, feedback via the local liaison intervention intake questionnaires, and next steps worksheets.

1. Address CWOP: The first overall key recommendation is addressing the impact "Children Without Placement" (CWOP) has had on staff morale and overall organizational stress. In general, recommendations to address the issues are increased levels of leadership communication, additional support given to offset increased workloads, and working with local staff to find solutions that will work in the local areas.
2. Supervisor Feedback and Support: Additional support for supervisors and facilitating feedback across the managerial, supervisory, and frontline workers is the second key recommendation. Supervisors need additional support from their supervisors to be able to adequately address the concerns of their staff. Employees at any level of the organization need to perceive that their voice has meaning and is being heard. Frustration occurs when stressful situations are not resolved through meaningful feedback and dialogue. A facilitation of the feedback process such as a 360-team evaluation especially focused on team development and supervisory support would assist in providing needed support and team development.
3. Leadership Communication: The third overall key recommendation is increasing the level and impact of communication from leadership. In times of turmoil, effective communication can lessen stressful situations by providing context and information where gaps develop. In communication voids, supposition and misinformation abound. Multimedia methods should be used as frequently as possible with short messages of support and encouragement to staff. Additionally, messages should contain explanations, solutions, or concrete next steps in addressing the concerns to staff issues.
4. Time and Task Analysis: A comprehensive set of systematic observations of current work tasks and responsibilities should be conducted to refine work metrics. It is unclear from the intervention process if the agency has conducted detailed work process studies to ascertain if the current agency staffing levels are reasonable and adequate to address the challenges the agency is facing. Such studies and data-driven analysis are effective ways to present needs to leadership, to budget, and to hire appropriately.
5. Trust in the Workplace: The IOE has studied trust and engagement in the workplace and have found that the level of perceived trust is a significant predictor of employee engagement on most all indicators. We know that trust is built through interactive communication and personal connection to coworkers and to the mission of the organization. Therefore, we recommend a continued commitment from leadership to increase communication, putting feedback mechanisms into place such as a 360-style team assessment, and addressing critical areas such as CWOP.

While the IOE advanced the use of the SEE with all participating local areas through facilitating communication regarding the survey, providing a pathway for action, gathering focus group data, and assisting in generating next step plans, the enacting of proposed action steps needs to come from the local area leadership. Employees expressed a desire to know that they are being heard and that leadership truly cares about their well-being. In turn, employees need to actively participate in the process of organizational improvement. Therefore, local engagement actions must continue even when it is difficult to find the "bandwidth" to build the organization's capacity in this fashion.

In addition to local actions, some engagement activities are appropriately coordinated from an agency wide perspective. The summary of key recommendations of addressing CWOP, facilitating supervisory support through feedback mechanisms, examining and improving leadership communication, refining key work metrics, and any activity building organizational trust would all assist at building an engaged workforce.

Finally, the next iteration and the data collected from the SEE should continue to provide direction as to areas in need of additional support. A multifaceted communication plan to roll out the survey and promote participation is needed. Employees need to understand that their responses from the last iteration of the SEE were heard by leadership and were the focus in decision making and organizational actions. Executive communication as to the importance of the workforce and an understanding of the level of stress placed on the agency—especially in the area of children without placement and the societal stresses of working during a pandemic—need to be sincerely and frequently communicated. The SEE was sent out to DFPS staff on February 28, 2022, and the results are expected this spring. The results will then be compiled and presented to all DFPS staff and will be examined to make improvements where needed.

HUMAN RESOURCE DIVISION

House Bill 5, 85th Regular Session, 2017, required DFPS to consolidate workforce management functions and adopted additional critical functions to better support the agency's 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 and Applicant Criminal Background Checks, Organizational and Leadership Development, and Veteran's Liaison functions under one division. The Human Resources Division uses a "store front" model by emphasizing accountability through consistency, communication, outreach, and coordination with staff at all levels of the agency. In keeping with the intent of Rider 8, the Human Resources Division coordinates multiple targeted HR initiatives which support the significant improvements made in turnover and retention 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 coordinates with representatives from all DFPS departments and programs to continuously improve the Human Resources Policy Manual in order to 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 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) – When HR or Program Management identifies concerns Human Resources staff, trained in mediation and facilitation, are available to conduct employment mediation, or a facilitated conversation designed to settle disputes outside of the formal complaint process with the help of an impartial third party.
- Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) Group - In order to help employees and supervisors focus on the agencies mission in 2019, the HR office partnered with the CPI Division to develop a pilot FMLA group. This group shifts the burden of monitoring and tracking the federal FMLA requirements to the Human Resources Division and frees first level supervisors of the burdens of FMLA allowing them to focus on protecting Texans. In 2020 the initiative grew to include two (2) additional areas of the CPS Division.
- Training Development - The Human Resources office develops and delivers prescriptive Human Resources training to help ensure compliance to applicable policy and statutes.
- Employee Wellness Benefits and Activities - The DFPS wellness program coordinates wellness activities and events to support our staff and promote a healthy balanced lifestyle. The wellness program continues to partner with wellness vendors under the Employees Retirement System to provide other health and wellness programs at low or no cost.
- Veteran's Liaison - The veteran's liaison position is focused on the recruitment and retention of veterans to meet the Governor's benchmarks related to veteran's employment. DFPS partners with multiple transition services to implement the "Service Member Recruiting, Retention, and Training" (SMRRT) internship program. The Veteran's Liaison also assists with veteran direct hires. 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. Additionally, The Disabled American Veterans (DAV) Department of Texas selected DFPS as the Large Employer of the Year for calendar year 2021 for their continued and on-going efforts to hire and retain veteran's and disabled veteran's thru both "veteran preference" and "veteran's only" job postings.
- Workers Compensation Program – Workers' compensation provides reasonable and necessary medical treatment and possible wage replacement, for employees who are injured or become ill while furthering agency business. When employees are released with temporary restrictions, the Return to Work program provides a way for employees to return to work with modified duties, which provides Programs with already-trained employees that can perform their duties. This functional area also manages the Hired Non-Owned Automobile Insurance program that provides protection for employees (and the agency) who have had an automobile accident while furthering agency business and are deemed at fault. When these three programs are used in a consistent manner, they

provide support to our employees by adding protections for work related injuries or illness which in turn assists to improve employee morale.

- Employee Classification and Compensation Management – HR Classifications continues to coordinate with management to evaluate and ensure compliance with the State Position Classification Act. This ensures that staff are properly classified and compensated for the critical work that they perform to promote safe and healthy families and protect children and vulnerable adults from abuse, neglect, and exploitation. In addition, HR Classifications collaborates and provides support to leadership to establish positions that would be classified and compensated in accordance with the State Position Classification Act in response to the M.D. v Abbott Expert Panel recommendations. Furthermore, HR Classifications has provided HR related support and guidance to Region 1 leadership to assist with the transition to the Single Source Continuum Contractor (SSCC) as part of the Community-Based Care model directed by Senate Bill 11, 85th Legislative Session.

- Hiring and Promotion Support - This functional area supports program management by centralizing the processing of Career Track Promotions, Management Directed Transfers, Hire Ahead, and Employee Initiated Transfers. This is an exception to the traditional method of filling vacancies and gives DFPS programs flexibility for staffing needs. Doing so helps reduce gaps in services when a vacancy occurs, and ensures critical positions are filled quickly. Children and vulnerable adults are better protected as caseworkers are trained and ready to assume a caseload. This also ensures coverage and balances the supervisor/worker ratio and helps avoid high caseloads which can lead to negative impact on casework equality. The goal of the program is to have a positive impact to field supervisors by allowing them to focus on program specific needs.

- Employee and Applicant Criminal Background Checks - This functional area supports Criminal Background Checks (CBC) for all current DFPS employees, interns, contractors, volunteers, and employees of other state agencies who need unescorted access to Criminal History Records Information (CHRI). HR assess the potential risks and liabilities related to the job's requirements and determines if any criminal offense is in substantial conflict with the agency's mission, vision, and values. An unsatisfactory hire can negatively impact the agency in wasted resources, damage agency's reputation, and lower morale amongst the team. By conducting an individualized assessment as part of the screening process, it not only ensures a safe and secure work environment for employees by reducing legal liability for negligent hiring, but also protects the clients we serve.

- Employee Records Management – The HR Records' functional area ensures proper documentation and record keeping for all employee's HR records. This centralized function retains the official record of an employee's information from hire to separation. These records are kept on file to support actions such as promotions, demotions, and disciplinary actions. The Records function is a vital part of the agency, as it allows the agency to gather precise data in respect to employees' individual transfers and assesses the rate of turnover. HR records are also critical to a manager in various decision-making situations. It also helps managers to review salary revisions, allowances, and other benefits related to salaries.

- Expert Panel Report - Human Resources is currently working with programs to assist in implementing recommendations provided by the Expert Panel report.

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 findings for the Supervisor Assessment process:

- Started administering for CPS and CPI supervisor candidates in May 2017.
- Proctored monthly in each of the 15 locations around the state.
- As of February 2022, 1,741 employees completed the supervisor exam with a 90 percent pass rate.
  - 13 percent of CPS workers with 18-month length of service (LOS) have taken the exam.
  - Statewide, 12 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 the 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 30 assessments completed with an average score of 77.
  - 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 February 2022, a total of eight-hundred and seventeen (817) hiring boards have been conducted since inception.
- The vendor that processes supervisor selections ensures that hiring managers provide the assessment results prior to approving the offer.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: TURNOVER- Q1 FY 2022

Figure 1: SUMMARY OF EMPLOYEE TURNOVER COMPARISON REPORT (as of Q1 FY22)[4]

| Functional Title	Turnover Rate (FY18)	Turnover Rate (FY19)	Turnover Rate (FY20)	Turnover Rate (FY21)	Turnover Rate (FY22 Q1)	% Change FY21 to FY22 YTD
All Employees	17.8%	19.3%	18.5%	23.8%	30.2%	27.0%
CPS Workers	20.2%	17.3%	20.7%	21.2%	27.0%	27.5%
CPS Supervisors	6.8%	7.9%	9.2%	7.1%	10.7%	49.4%
CPS Program	17.4%	16.1%	18.4%	19.8%	27.4%	38.4%
CPS CVS Caseworker	17.4%	17.1%	24.7%	24.6%	35.2%	43.3%
CPS CVS Supervisor	4.3%	7.7%	10.2%	5.7%	11.5%	103.2%
CPS CVS Program	15.6%	16.6%	23.1%	23.5%	34.5%	47.2%
CPS FBSS Caseworker	19.9%	23.3%	18.6%	21.3%	16.6%	-22.2%
CPS FBSS Supervisor	9.8%	9.1%	7.1%	8.3%	7.6%	-7.4%
CPS FBSS Program	17.9%	20.8%	16.1%	20.7%	21.9%	6.0%
CPS OTH Caseworker	5.4%	7.6%	9.0%	6.6%	11.7%	75.5%
CPS OTH Supervisor	0.0%	3.8%	11.9%	19.8%	0.0%	-19.8%
CPS OTH Program	11.1%	10.6%	9.4%	10.4%	15.1%	45.3%
CPS SI Investigator	12.1%	13.2%	8.0%	17.1%	15.1%	-11.7%
CPI Workers				40.8%	44.4%	8.8%
CPI Workers (Non SI)	27.1%	31.9%	28.8%	43.2%	47.3%	9.3%
CPI Supervisors	8.7%	8.5%	10.3%	14.6%	13.0%	-11.4%
CPI Program	21.7%	25.1%	22.3%	34.9%	40.1%	15.0%
DCI Workers	29.9%	24.8%	18.2%	48.9%	36.4%	-25.6%
DCI Supervisors	0.0%	16.7%	17.4%	50.0%	0.0%	-50.0%
DCI Program	21.8%	19.0%	20.3%	36.4%	25.4%	-30.2%
RCI Workers	19.5%	29.8%	28.8%	26.4%	44.0%	66.6%
RCI Supervisors	41.0%	10.3%	0.0%	14.8%	21.1%	42.1%
RCI Program	27.9%	24.7%	21.6%	26.3%	35.0%	33.3%
APS Workers	25.2%	20.7%	17.9%	25.1%	31.9%	27.1%
APS Supervisors	18.4%	7.2%	1.2%	9.6%	14.6%	52.3%
APS Program	21.9%	17.5%	15.2%	21.9%	28.5%	30.2%
SWI Workers	16.4%	16.8%	7.2%	10.9%	15.9%	45.5%
SWI Supervisors	0.0%	5.5%	2.7%	4.5%	0.0%	-4.5%
SWI Program	13.6%	14.7%	6.8%	9.7%	13.4%	38.1%
PEI Program				14.0%	36.4%	160.6%

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[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 Investigation 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- Q1 FY 2022[5]

[6]FIGURE 2: Q1 FY 2022 DFPS All Employees Tenure by Region*
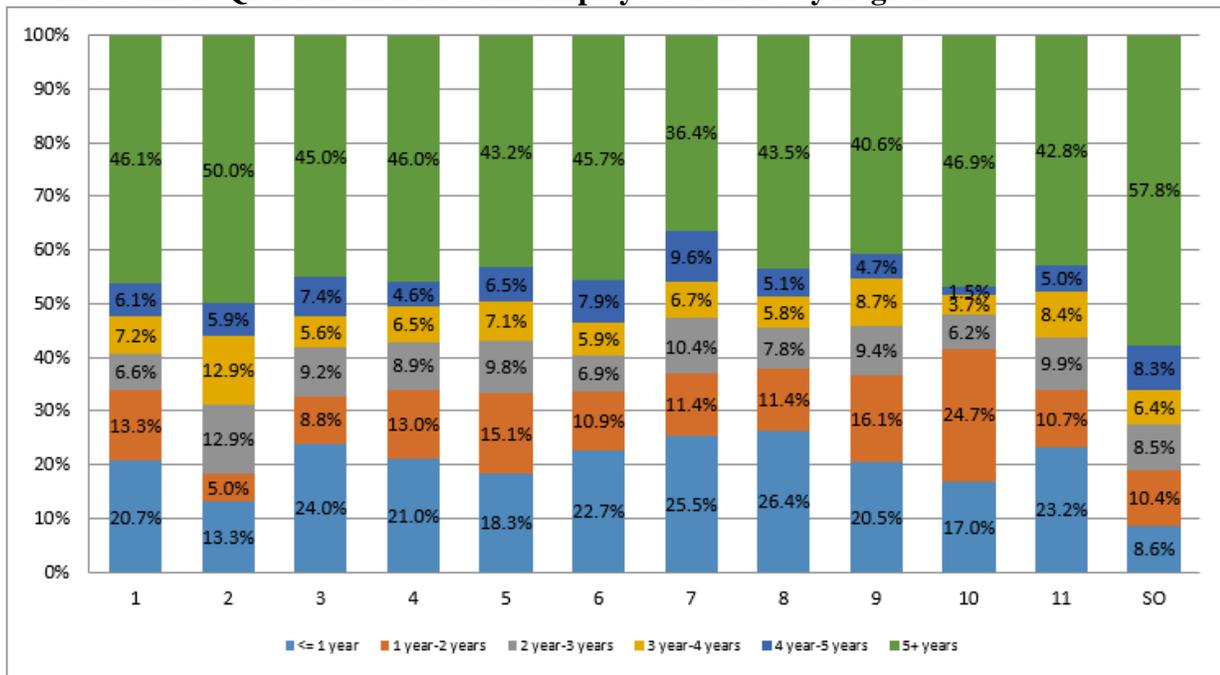
*State Office (SO) houses limited direct delivery staff.

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:

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[5] All tenure data as of November 2021.

- Not case assignable is a tenure of less than 98 days.
- Partially case assignable is a tenure of 98 days to 128 days.
- 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: Q1 FY 2022 CPS CVS Tenure by Region*

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

19
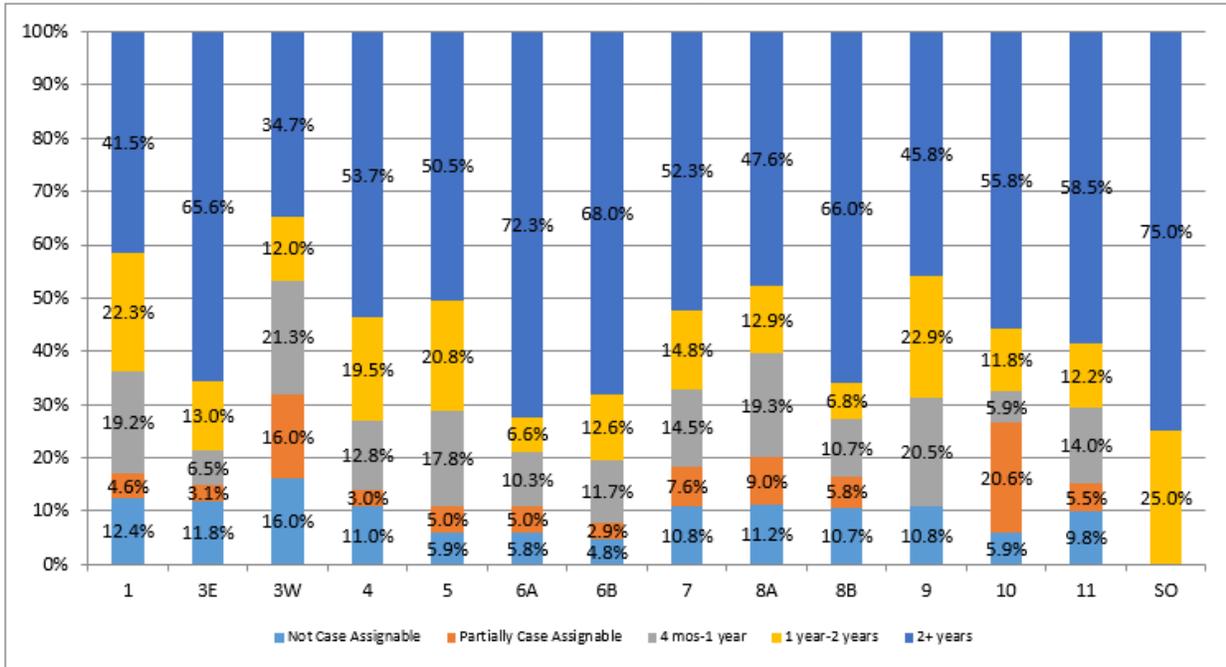
FIGURE 4: Q1 FY 2022 CPS FBSS Tenure by Region*
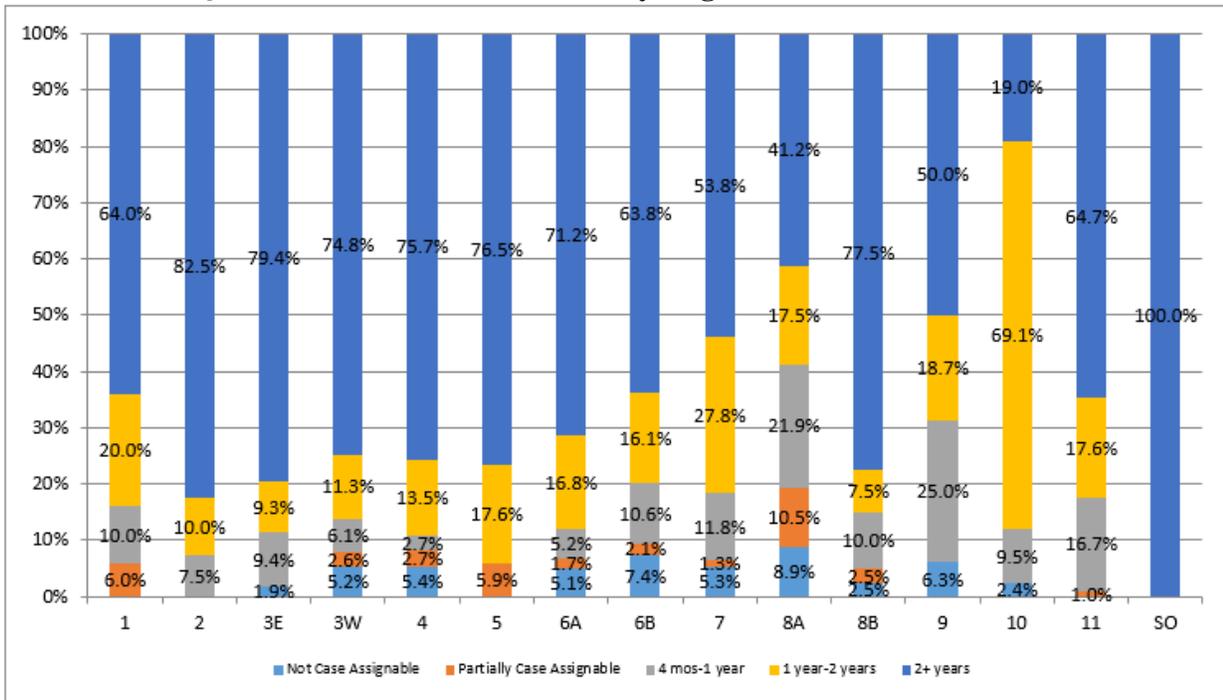
*State Office (SO) houses limited direct delivery staff.

FIGURE 5: Q1 FY 2022 CPI INV Tenure by Region*
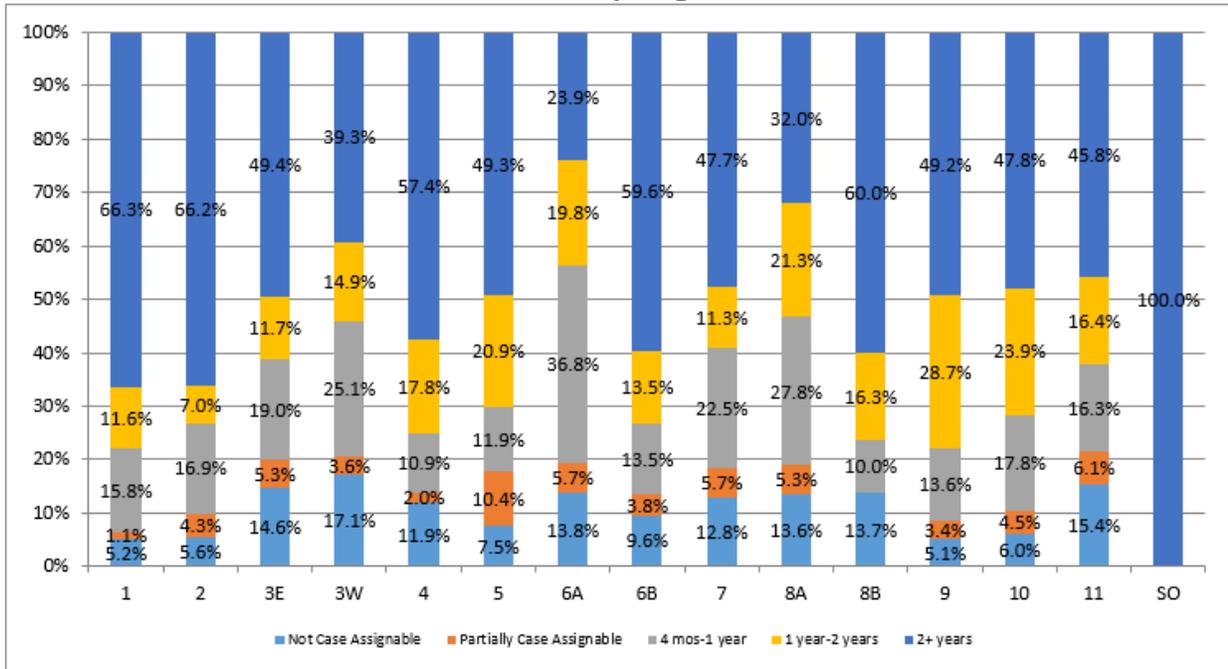
*State Office (SO) houses limited direct delivery staff.

FIGURE 6: Q1 FY 2022 RCI Tenure*
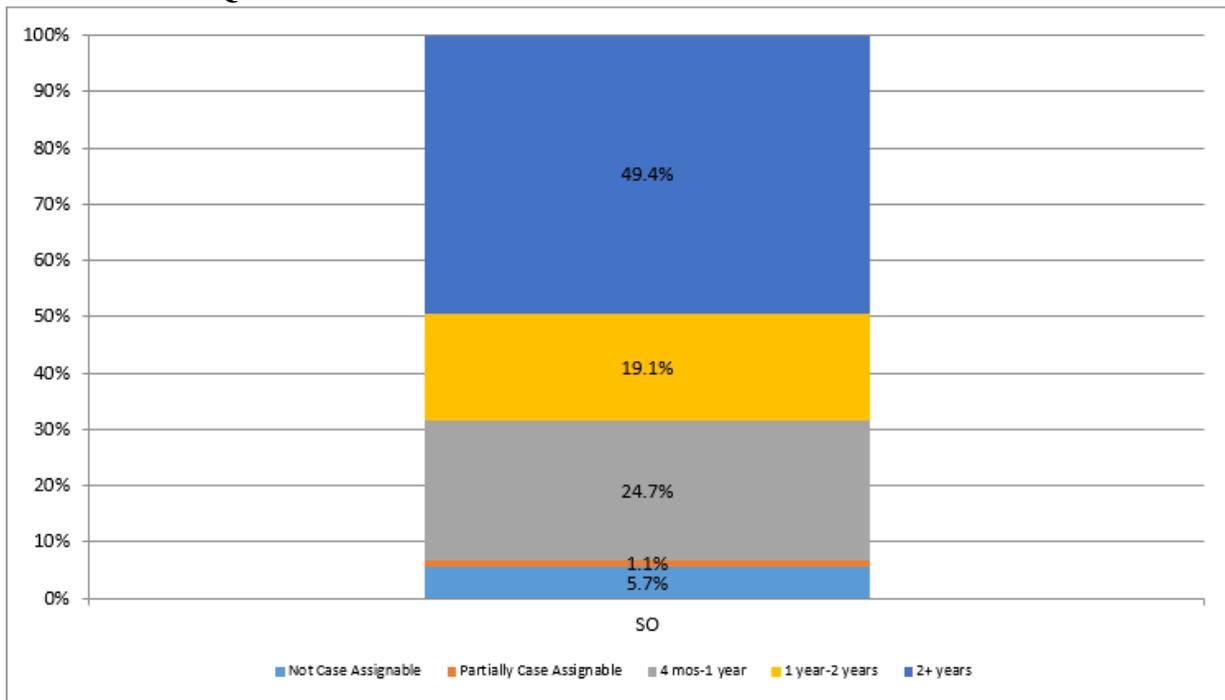
*While these staff report to State Office, they are housed around the state.

FIGURE 7: Q1 FY 2022 DCI Tenure
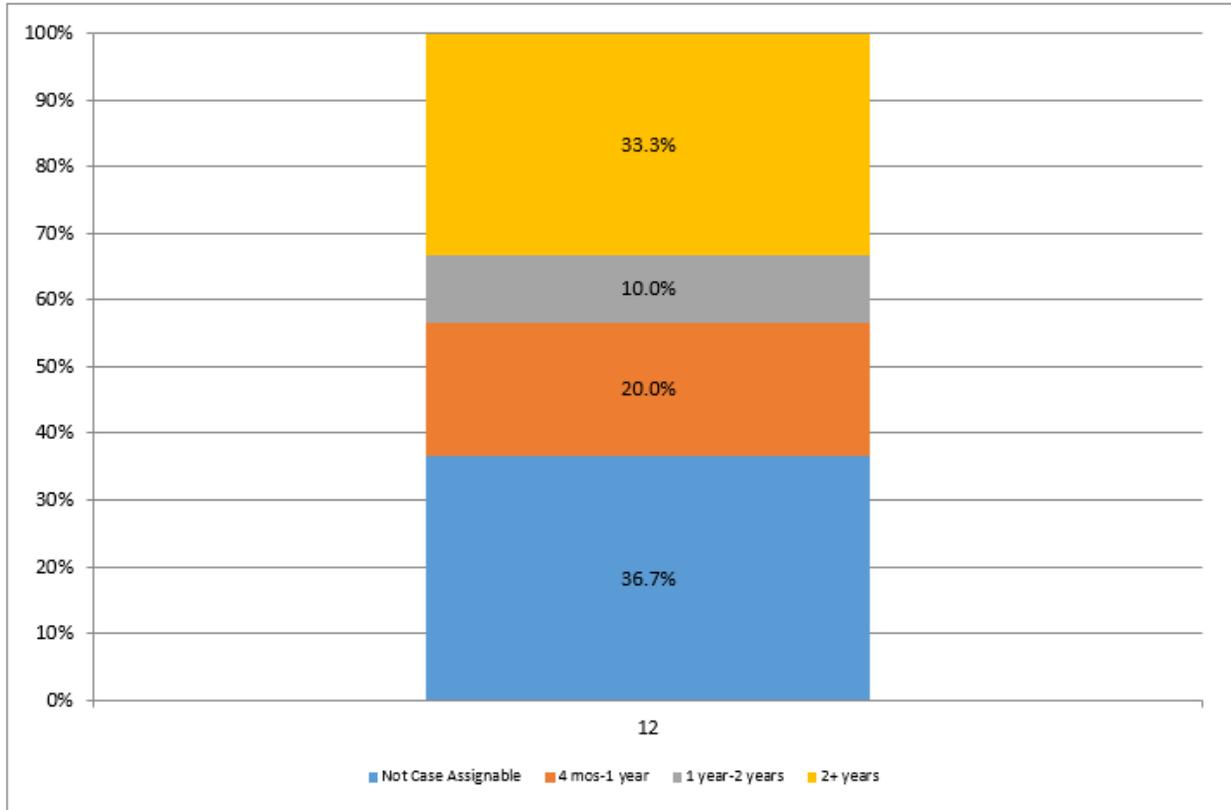
**FIGURE 8: Q1 FY 2022 APS In-Home Tenure by Region**
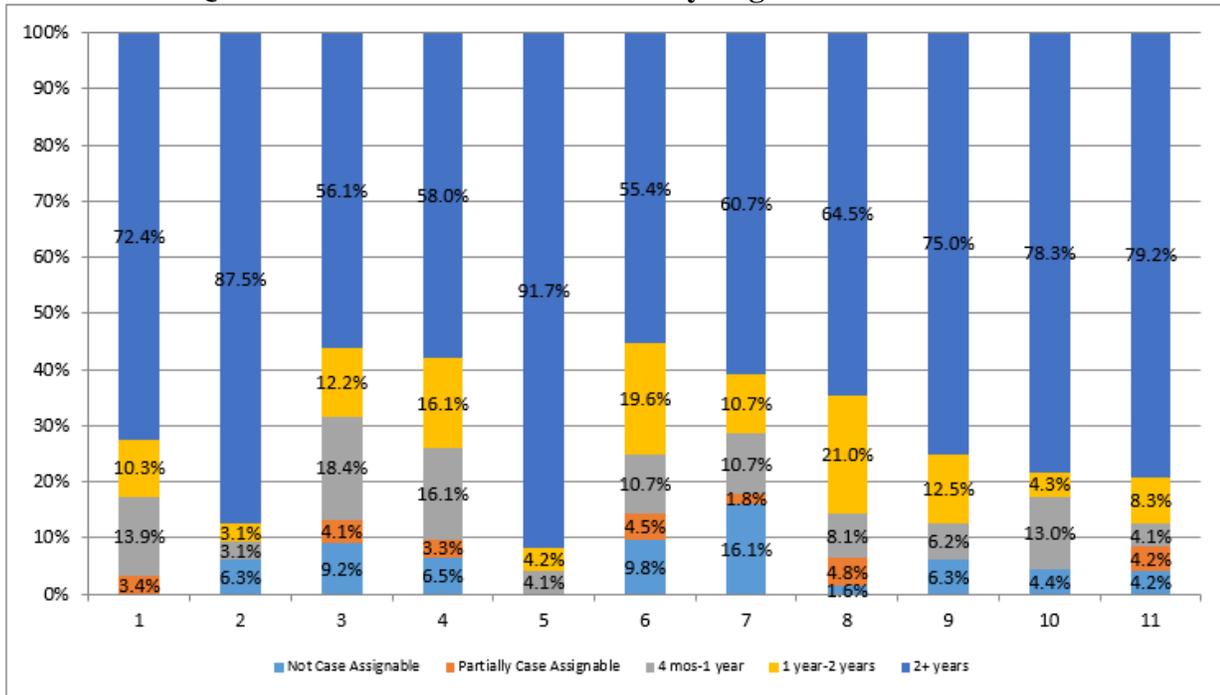
FIGURE 9: Q1 FY 2022 SWI Tenure
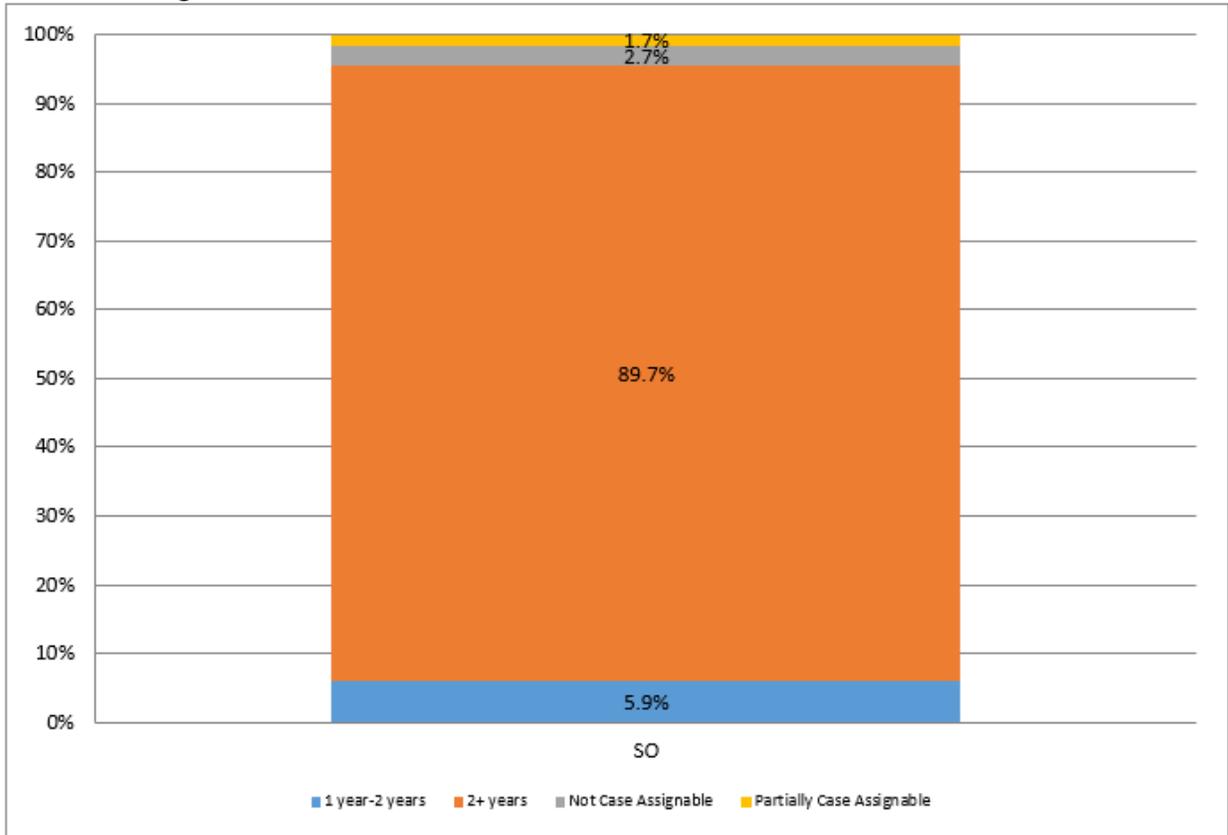
*While these staff report to State Office, they are housed around the state.

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
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

Target Strategy	Initiative Name	Impacted Area(s)	Status March 2020
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

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