



**TEXAS**  
Department of Family  
and Protective Services

# **Family Based Safety Services Pilot Evaluation**

December 2018



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## Introduction

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DFPS, through Child Protective Services (CPS), has been providing Family Based Safety Services (FBSS), also known as "in-home services" and "family preservation services," since the 1970s. FBSS seeks to maintain children safely in their homes by strengthening the family's ability to protect their children and reduce dangers to their children's safety. FBSS can provide a variety of services - either directly by CPS staff, through contracted services providers, or through referrals to community-based providers. Traditionally, services include, but are not limited to: parenting instruction, family counseling, crisis intervention, substance abuse treatment and domestic violence intervention. FBSS caseworkers may also provide one-on-one parenting and homemaker skills in areas where community-based services are not available.

Texas Family Code, section 264.169, added by Acts 2017, 85th Legislature, requires the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) to implement a pilot program in two regions of the state to deliver Family Based Safety Services (FBSS) by contracting with a single nonprofit or governmental entity commonly referred to as the Family Services Contractor (FSC).

The FSC will provide FBSS through the delivery of case management and oversight of a continuum of quality community/paid services that include evidence-based, evidence-informed or promising practice interventions responsive to the needs of the families served. By contracting with the FSC, DFPS seeks to expand services in areas that are historically lacking resources, increase the overall quality of services, and provide family-centered practices that are replicable in diverse geographic and demographic settings. The contract must include a transition plan for the provision of services that ensures the continuity of services for children and families in the selected regions. DFPS will measure contractor performance on increasing the protective factors of families, successfully closing cases, and decreasing the number of children and families who return to services (recidivism).

Not later than December 31, 2018, the department must report on the progress of the pilot to the appropriate standing committees of the legislature having jurisdiction over Child Protective Services. The report must include an evaluation of each contracted entity's success in achieving the performance outcomes, and recommend whether the pilot program be continued, expanded, or terminated. This report describes the implementation of the pilot to date, outlines the evaluation approach, and reports initial performance outcomes.

## FBSS Pilot Implementation

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On January 9, 2018, DFPS executed a contract with Pathways Youth and Family Services, Inc. to serve as the first FSC in Region 10. Region 10 serves the El Paso area and includes the following counties: Brewster, Culberson, El Paso, Hudspeth, Jeff Davis, and Presidio. Pathways officially

named the program HomeSAFE Family Services and began providing services to families on March 12, 2018. DFPS released a Request for Application (RFA) for a second pilot site in Nueces County in Region 11 on November 6, 2018. DFPS anticipates a contract award March 1, 2019.

Based upon risk and/or danger indicators, Child Protective Investigations refers families to the FSC to:

1. Help families alleviate crises that might lead to the out-of-home placement of children,
2. Maintain the safety of children without legal intervention,
3. Support families in obtaining needed services,
4. Promote parent competencies and behaviors that will enhance the parent's protective actions and increase their abilities to promote child safety in the home,
5. Promote mobilization of a "safety network" that will help monitor and ensure child safety, and
6. Connect families to existing community programs and resources.

The FSC must adhere to the following FSC Pilot model requirements. The FSC will:

1. Prioritize child safety first and foremost.
2. Make all decisions based on the best interests of the individual child.
3. Accept all referrals from Child Protective Investigations.
4. Be available to respond to emergency situations during non-working hours.
5. Provide case management and necessary services for client families who Child Protective Investigations has referred for FBSS. Case management services include caseworker visits with the child and family, family group conferencing / decision-making meetings, assessment and development of the plan of service, and coordinating and assessing service effectiveness to ensure the case is progressing toward closure.
6. Develop a service array of traditional, evidence-based, evidence-informed and promising practices that the FSC determines are necessary to meet the needs of children and families. The FSC may subcontract, but must maintain ultimate responsibility for the service array. The service array shall also consist of a network of all local public, private, faith-based, and nonprofit community-based organizations designed to meet the most prevalent needs of the client demographic of the selected Region 10 area.
7. Offer individualized, timely services designed specifically for each child and family served with a focus on skill acquisition and behavioral change that directly increases child safety.
8. Ensure that DFPS is the payer of last resort and work to maximize Medicaid, private insurance, or other available resources for allowable services and qualified clients.
9. Ensure close coordination and interaction with Medicaid managed care providers as well as local and state health agencies, including Local Mental Health Authorities (LMHA's).

10. After establishing the minimum Service Array needed to serve referred Clients, the FSC will work to expand the availability of services that clients require in or near their home communities.

Total Legacy Cases Transferred to HomeSAFE on March 12, 2018: 51<sup>1</sup>

Total Legacy Cases Transferred to HomeSAFE March 12-May 31, 2018: 91<sup>2</sup>

Total New Cases Opened March 12,2018-November 20, 2018: 389<sup>3</sup>

## Evaluation of the FSC

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To ensure the safety of children and quality of services provided in individual cases, DFPS implemented an internal, comprehensive, multidisciplinary team to monitor, evaluate, provide technical assistance, and support the performance of the contractor. DFPS intentionally focused on integrating monitoring activities from both DFPS/CPS state office staff (program, legal, budget, information technology, data and systems improvement and contracts) and regional staff. Evaluation activity includes contract monitoring, quality assurance case reads, and analysis of performance and outcome data.

### Contract Monitoring

Enhanced Contract and Performance Monitoring is an increased level of monitoring and is required for high dollar and high risk contracts. Enhanced monitoring for the FBSS Region 10 Contract includes increased frequency of onsite monitoring visits, which are conducted quarterly. Each monitoring is considered a full monitoring covering three months of data. The contract manager with support from the multi-disciplinary team addresses administrative, programmatic, and fiscal performance during each monitoring visit.

### Regional Quality Oversight and Monitoring

A regional quality oversight and monitoring team made up of specialized CPS staff measures critical dimensions of the contractor's performance regarding the delivery of case management and service array. The regional team reviews approximately 60 open and closed cases a month using a standardized case review tool that includes an evaluation of safety, family engagement and provision of services. If there are issues identified through these reviews, this team contacts HomeSAFE and provides technical assistance. If during the course of the reviews, any information is obtained that indicates a child is being abused or neglected, a report is made to the DFPS Hotline.

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<sup>1</sup> Based on a manual count by Region 10 staff

<sup>2</sup> Based on a manual count by Region 10 staff

<sup>3</sup> Executive Dashboard. There were a few cases opened to FBSS but not transferred to HomeSAFE because, based on further review after stage was opened, it was determined the case did not need services.

## Performance Data and Information

The DFPS Office of Data and Systems Improvement (DSI) analyzes patterns and trends from a wide array of reports and information. The reports and information DSI analyzes include:

- Monthly reports on the number of cases referred from Child Protective Investigations to HomeSAFE
- Monthly reports about timely completion of critical tasks including contact with children and parents and completion of Family Plans of Service
- Monthly reports on removals from HomeSAFE cases
- Monthly reports on the performance measures of time to case closure and cases closed with risk reduced
- Quarterly aggregate reports on all HomeSAFE case reviews
- Quarterly reports from HomeSAFE on staffing and training
- Semi-annual reports from HomeSAFE on improvements in family protective factors and client satisfaction surveys

DFPS shares these patterns and trends with HomeSAFE and uses them to identify areas for improvement and technical assistance.

## FSC Performance

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Data and information contained in this report is related to the first pilot site. Future reports will contain performance information for each contracted FSC.

### HomeSAFE

#### Compliance

DFPS conducted quarterly onsite monitoring visits on June 27-29, 2018 and September 27-28, 2018. The first monitoring visit identified issues around documentation, background checks, policy and procedure development, and the need for a Continuous Quality Management Plan and Accounting Plan enhancements. The second monitoring visit identified additional non-compliance related to documentation, professional licensing requirements, and validation of self-reported performance. The contractor developed corrective action plans which are in progress.

#### Quality

Based on an analysis of information and data from March 2018 (when HomeSAFE started accepting cases) through August 2018, DFPS has identified the following strengths:

- There have been no substantiated Office of Consumer Relations (OCR) complaints
- There have been no abuse or neglect fatalities in HomeSAFE cases
- HomeSAFE made monthly face-to-face contact with 95.2% of children receiving services

DFPS has identified practice issues around: (1) assessing and addressing safety, especially around substance abuse; (2) timely and effectively engaging families; and (3) providing timely and appropriate services. In some instances, documentation has been identified as an issue in evaluating these practice issues. DFPS has been providing and continues to provide technical assistance and support to HomeSAFE in these areas. The HomeSAFE team has been responsive to guidance and HomeSAFE staff continue to enhance their skills serving families and ensuring safety. The difficulties and learning curve HomeSAFE case managers face is parallel to that of DFPS or others learning to engage and serve a high risk population.

CPS has provided regular consultation and training. Face to face refresher trainings to HomeSAFE supervisors and staff include the following topics:

- CPS policies adopted by HomeSAFE ;
- Structured Decision Making Family Strengths and Needs Assessment;
- Family Plans of Service;
- Cultural Competency;
- Substance Abuse Training; and
- Billing and Payment Processes

DFPS staff remain in regular contact with HomeSAFE's leadership to provide ongoing support and consultation regarding case management related activities.

## **Outcomes**

The pilot's performance measures were structured to incentivize HomeSAFE to reduce recidivism on successfully closed cases while maintaining the same rate of successful case closure in the same period of time. A description of each performance measure along with HomeSAFE's performance and agreed upon targets for FY18 is included in Appendix A.

Recidivism is one of the primary contract performance measures. Recidivism is measured as cases closed in a fiscal year where a child, confirmed perpetrator, or an adult receiving FBSS services is subsequently confirmed as a victim or perpetrator within 12 months of case closure. Performance on the measure will not be available until early FY20. Home SAFE started accepting cases in March 2018 and eight cases had closed by the end of FY18.

HomeSAFE did not meet the FY18 target for rate of successful closure (Outcome 1), time to closure (Outcome 2a) or the quality service measures (Outcomes 3, 6 and 7). Given the small number of cases closed in FY18 and the unavailability of recidivism data, it is impossible to determine whether this is a statistically significant representation of HomeSAFE's overall work. HomeSAFE performance on the 22 cases closed FYTD19 (through October) is better. The sample of closed cases for FY18 is simply too small to arrive at any conclusions regarding performance.

An evaluation of HomeSAFE's performance through full FY19 will provide a more accurate reflection of their actual work through case closure. A meaningful evaluation of recidivism after

case closure will not be available until FY21. The cases closed in FY19 need to be tracked for a full 12 months to determine the recidivism rate.

## **Conclusion and Recommendations**

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Outsourcing of case management is a significant change to current practices in child welfare in Texas. While there have been some challenges to executing this pilot, DFPS and HomeSAFE remain committed to building a successful, family-focused initiative. The effort to stand up this new family services process was enormous and involved significant changes to existing systems that included evaluation of philosophies about serving high risk families and systems designed to support service delivery. An area of paramount concern was service continuity for families. Therefore, it was critical that CPS and HomeSAFE develop a seamless case transfer process. In this aspect, the pilot has been successful.

Implementation involved joint efforts between DFPS and the contractor to develop capacity and establish programmatic practices. DFPS and HomeSAFE continue to work closely to ensure the safety of children while successfully delivering services to their families. Additionally, efforts continue to include streamlining DFPS information technology processes to align with the needs of the pilot, including:

- User friendly contractor access to the Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS), commonly referred to as IMPACT, and
- Developing an electronic accounting process that serves the needs of both DFPS and the contractor.

Recommendations:

1. Continue pilot in Region 10 and proceed with second site.
2. Submit a new evaluation report by December 31, 2020.

## Appendix A:

Performance Measures and Descriptions <sup>4</sup>	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual <sup>5</sup>	FYTD 2019 (thru October)
<p><b>Outcome 1</b> - Contractor is able to at least maintain the same rate of successfully closing cases as compared to target which is a three year average of historic CPS Region 10 performance taking into account the contractor only provided services for part of FY18:</p> <p><i>FPR Stages Successfully Closed (reported monthly)</i></p>	77%	5 of 8 (63%)	91%
<p><b>Outcome 2A</b> - Contractor will at least maintain length of time to successful closure as compared to target which is a three year average of historic CPS Region 10 performance taking into account the contractor only provided services for part of FY18</p> <p><i>Average Days to Closure (reported monthly)</i></p>	89 days	144 days (5 cases successfully closed)	132 days
<p><b>Outcome 2B</b> – Contractor will at least maintain the length of time FBSS cases are open as compared to target which is a three year average of historic CPS Region 10 performance taking into account the contractor only provided services for part of FY18:</p> <p><i>For cases open at the end of the fiscal year (or end of month), average days open (reported monthly)</i></p>	71 days	68 days (204 cases open on August 31)	90 days
<p><b>Outcome 3:</b> Per the four part protective factors survey, clients have enhanced Family Functioning/Resilience (part I), Social Supports (part II), Concrete Supports (part III), and Nurturing and Attachment (part IV).</p> <p><i>(Contractor reports semi-annually)</i></p>	90%	3 client surveys received; 1 of 3 indicated improvement in one of the 4 parts.	NA

<sup>4</sup> DRIT 91151 – FBSS Pilot Dashboard

<sup>5</sup> New to Vendor Cases

Performance Measures and Descriptions <sup>4</sup>	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual <sup>5</sup>	FYTD 2019 (thru October)
<p><b>Outcome 4</b> – Contractor will reduce recidivism for children receiving FBSS services as compared to the historic CPS Region 10 performance.</p> <p><i>(Recidivism is measured as 12 months from case closure and, as a result, recidivism on cases closed in FY18 will not be available until early FY 20)</i></p>	Target to be determined	NA	NA
<p><b>Outcome 5</b> – Contractor will reduce recidivism for perpetrators and other adult principals receiving FBSS services by 10% for cases successfully closed as compared to CPS Region 10 performance on cases successfully closed in FY17.</p> <p><i>(Recidivism is measured as 12 months from case closure and, as a result, recidivism on cases closed in FY18 will not be available until early FY20)</i></p>	Target to be determined	NA	NA
<p><b>Outcome 6:</b> Clients have achieved at least 50% of their goals from the Family Plan of Service.</p> <p><i>(Contractor reports semi-annually)</i></p>	90%	3 of 7 (43%)	NA
<p><b>Outcome 6:</b> Clients view services received positively.</p> <p><i>(Contractor reports semi-annually)</i></p>	70%	20/20 (100%)	NA