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TO: Jason Dudich, Director  
State Budget Agency

FROM: Terry J. Stigdon, MSN, RN  
Director

SUBJECT: Agency Overview – Budget Transmittal Letter – FY 2020-21

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) is the state agency charged with providing child protection and IV-D child support for Hoosier children. DCS was established in January 2005 by an executive order of Governor Mitch Daniels. DCS protects children who are victims of abuse or neglect and strengthens families through services that focus on family support and preservation. The Department also administers child support, child protection, adoption, and foster care throughout the state of Indiana.

**Mission:** The Indiana Department of Child Services engages with families and collaborates with state, local and community partners to protect children from abuse and neglect and to provide child support services.

**Vision:** Indiana children will live in safe, healthy and supportive families and communities.

**Values:**

- Respect – Every person has value, worth and dignity



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- Prevention – Families should have access to the resources and knowledge to prevent their children from experiencing abuse and neglect.
- Safety – Every child has the right to be free from abuse and neglect
- Stability – The best place for children to grow up is with their own families
- Permanency – Children and older youth have the right to permanency
- Responsibility – Parents have the primary responsibility for the care and safety of their children
- Accountability – Each person is accountable for outcomes and one's own growth and development
- Continuous Improvement – The agency will engage in continuous improvement efforts to improve outcomes for children and families

## **STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATION**

The Indiana Department of Child Services is led by the Director. These positions report directly to the Director: Deputy Director of Child Support; Deputy Director of Staff Development; Deputy Director of Juvenile Justice Initiatives and Support; Deputy Director of Field Operations; Deputy Director of Placement Support and Compliance; Deputy Director of Child Welfare Services and Outcomes; Deputy Director of Permanency and Practice Support; Chief of Staff; and Associate Director.

DCS' infrastructure includes local offices in all ninety two (92) Indiana counties, organized into eighteen (18) geographical regions. In State Fiscal Year 2013, DCS created an additional region to encompass central office Family Case Managers (FCMs) from the Institutional Assessment Unit and the Collaborative Care Unit, for a total of 19 regions. In 2010, DCS added a centralized hotline, located in Indianapolis, and in 2013, added three regional hotline sites located in Blackford, Lawrence and St. Joseph counties. A fourth regional hotline site opened in Vanderburgh County in June 2014. In the spring of 2017, DCS began the process of dividing its Marion County local office – DCS' largest office in the state's most populous city, Indianapolis – into four smaller local offices. This localization plan was initiated to create a more community focused structure that will improve access and quality of interactions with families by fostering a community approach to child welfare as well as improve employee retention. The first new office was opened on the west side of Indianapolis in March 2017. In December 2017, the localization plan was changed to include the creation of a fourth office in Marion County. A new office located on the east side of Indianapolis opened in May 2018. The other two smaller, local offices



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will remain co-located in the current location, and will split into a north office and a south office.

DCS administers programs with the goal of developing, procuring, and delivering a range of proven, effective services to ensure the well-being of children at risk for and victims of abuse and/or neglect, and to ensure their financial support. The following is an overview of the programs DCS currently delivers to Hoosier children and families.

### **In-Home Care**

In-home services include a broad array of preservation and reunification services for children and families to help families (including pre-adoptive and extended families) at risk or in crisis, including services to prevent the unnecessary removal of children from their homes. Services funded through this program are delivered to families in their own homes and are designed to keep the family together. Services include home-based services, parenting skill building, substance use disorder treatment, domestic violence services, family centered therapy, and mental health services. These services help to maintain the safety of children in their own homes, support families preparing to reunify or adopt, and assist families in obtaining other services to meet multiple needs. Reunification services also assist children in returning to their families or placement in adoption or legal guardianship with relatives.

### **Out-of-Home Care**

One of DCS' values is that the most desirable place for children to grow up is in their own homes, as long as they can do so safely. When working with a family, DCS strives to utilize services and community supports to allow children to remain safely in their own homes. At times, however, in order to ensure the child's safety, DCS must remove the child and identify an alternative placement option.

Out-of-home services include placement options and support services for children who are unable to remain safely in their own homes. When children are removed from their homes, DCS utilizes a variety of placement options, including licensed and unlicensed relative placements, DCS and private foster homes, and residential treatment facilities. DCS utilizes out-of-home care only when there is no other alternative to ensure a child's safety and well-being from abuse or neglect.



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## Child Services Operations

Child Services Operations reflects expenditures for DCS staff critical to carrying out the mission and activities associated with all other program areas, including (1) assessing allegations of abuse and neglect, (2) ongoing case management of child welfare cases, (3) in-home and out-of-home placement, and (4) permanency for children in foster care. The Child Services Operations program is made up of five key areas which are detailed below:

- 1. Child Welfare Field Operations** – Local office child welfare staff (Family Case Managers, Supervisors, Local Office Directors) providing direct services to abused and neglected children and their families. Family Case Managers (FCMs) and their Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that each report of child abuse and neglect is assessed in a timely and thorough manner, and they are responsible for case management and service referral for children and families who are involved in formal cases through the court system or informal adjustments (voluntary cases) that are approved by judges and monitored by the local office.
- 2. Legal Operations** – The legal team (staff attorneys and chief counsels) provide legal representation for the agency to ensure the courts have all necessary information in order to determine the best interest of the child. DCS attorneys at the local level handle all DCS court proceedings including CHINS cases, termination of parental rights cases, any DCS involvement in adoptions, and administrative appeal cases.
- 3. Central Office Staff Support** – Central office divisions established to oversee, manage, and support the delivery of services and programs to abused and neglected children and their families and to children at risk of abuse or neglect. These divisions develop, implement, and manage effective programs, policies, and support tools for staff working with abused and neglected children and their families. Central office operations staff ensures compliance with federal, state, and local laws regarding child abuse and neglect and administer federal grants and funding to support abused and neglected children and their families.
- 4. Staff Development and Training** – The child welfare training program delivers training to new and experienced child welfare staff and foster parents. The Practice Model division is housed in staff development and training and they are responsible for training all staff throughout DCS on the practice model and its appropriate application. The DCS practice



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model provides the foundation for trust-building interactions between DCS and the public we serve. A fundamental tool of the practice model is the Child and Family Team Meeting (CFTM), which brings together all of a child's formal and informal supports to discuss the child's well-being.

- 5. Business Operations and Administration** – Activities necessary to operate local offices in all 92 counties, along with child abuse and neglect hotline locations.

## **Permanency and Practice Support**

DCS believes that permanency for a child means a safe, stable, and secure home and family, love, unconditional commitment, and lifelong support. The Department believes that every youth exiting foster care should have at a minimum a permanent connection with one caring, committed adult who will provide them with guidance and support as they make their way into adulthood. The Permanency and Practice Support program includes funding for all services designed to remove inefficiencies in an effort to increase the number of children achieving permanency through reunification, adoption, guardianship, or another permanent, planned living arrangement (APPLA).

## **Older Youth Services**

The goal of the Older Youth Services program is to help youth practice living interdependently (building their own lifelong, social support network) to gain the skills and knowledge to transition successfully out of the foster care system. The Older Youth Services program includes Older Youth Services (OYS), Collaborative Care, and Voluntary Services. OYS and Collaborative Care are sets of services and supports designed to assist older youth in successfully achieving their case plan goal (adoption, reunification, guardianship, or independent living). OYS and Collaborative Care are primarily focused on helping those youth who are expected to turn 18 in foster care to transition into self-sufficient adults, but the programs can be implemented concurrently with other goals like reunification and adoption. Voluntary Services are a set of services for youth to turn to while in foster care and are designed to prevent them from "aging out" of the system. These services are geared toward assisting former foster youth in the areas of housing, employment, and education.



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## Prevention

The Prevention program includes a broad service array intended to prevent child abuse and neglect. The goal of all prevention services is to reduce the need for referrals to Child Protective Services or involvement with the juvenile justice system. Services include Healthy Families Indiana and Community Partners for Child Safety, as well as primary prevention efforts through Prevent Child Abuse Indiana. In addition, delinquency prevention is provided by Youth Service Bureau organizations.

## Juvenile Justice

The Juvenile Justice program includes the funding for services for children with pending delinquency matters and ordered by local juvenile courts in Indiana. Pursuant to IC 31-15-2-7, DCS is the Indiana agency responsible administering Title IV-E funds. Both child welfare services and juvenile delinquency (JD) services (both of which are eligible IV-E services) were historically funded at the county level. In 2008, as a part of property tax reform, funding for these services transferred from the county to the state. While responsibility for the case management associated with juvenile delinquency cases remain with local county probation departments, in order to retain the ability to claim federal reimbursement, funding to pay for JD services transferred to DCS.

The Juvenile Justice Program makes available to county probation departments all services within the DCS service array for use with the juvenile delinquency population. Services include placement in residential treatment facilities, licensed child care agencies (group homes), foster care, and community-based services.

## Child Support

Each state is federally required to have a “single and separate organizational unit” to administer Title IV-D child support services (45 CFR 302.12), and in Indiana, the DCS Child Support Bureau (CSB) fills that role. CSB is responsible for paternity establishment, support order establishment (both child and medical support), enforcement, and payment processing of child support. While CSB is the single state agency responsible for administering the IV-D program, it partners with the local county prosecutors who enforce the program at the county level. CSB also has cooperative agreements with Clerks of Circuit Courts, established magistrates, and special hearing officers specifically to adjudicate Title IV-D child support cases. The primary constituents for the child



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support program are custodial parties who have requested services, those who currently or formerly received TANF or Medicaid, and interstate cases. Services are carried out by the Child Support Bureau at the State level, but in collaboration with county prosecuting attorneys, clerks, and the courts in each county.

## **ACCOMPLISHMENTS & CHALLENGES DURING FY 2018 – 2019 BIENNIUM**

The following information reflects the Department's accomplishments and challenges during the FY 2018 – 2019 biennium:

- **Family Case Manager (FCM) Turnover** – The recruitment and retention of top talent are high priorities at DCS, and all management levels are committed to developing agency-wide, regional, and local office initiatives focused on retaining our most valuable resources – the employees. The rate of turnover for FCMs in 2017 was 30%. The top reasons for turnover were a stressful environment with a non-competitive salary. The stressful environment is being addressed in leadership development, while salary adjustments were applied using \$25 million from the state's surplus that was provided by the Governor in June 2018.
- **Employee Assistance Program** - DCS continues to promote the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to provide a level of mental health support for the agency members. The EAP is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and offers information and advice to help all employees solve a wide range of problems – everything from relationship and family concerns to anxiety, depression, alcohol and drug abuse, stress, grief, parenting, and even financial or legal issues. All DCS team members and household members have access to three free, confidential in-person counseling visits with a licensed therapist, per issue, per year. Along with telephonic and in-person counseling, online resources and seminars cover a host of topics to promote emotional well-being, health, and wellness. Beginning January 1, 2019, employees, their dependents, and individuals living in their household, will have access to eight (8) free face-to-face counseling sessions with a licensed therapist per issue, per year. This is a significant increase from the current three (3) available sessions.
- **FCM Caseload** – While the total number of cases have decreased over the last year, the agency is not fully compliant with the caseload standards required by statute. Pursuant to IC 31-25-2-5, DCS is required



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to ensure that FCM staffing levels are maintained so that each region has enough FCMs to allow caseloads to be at not more than (1) twelve active cases relating to initial assessments, including assessments of an allegation of child abuse or neglect; or (2) seventeen children monitored and supervised in active cases relating to ongoing services. An increase in open cases or assessments impacted the Department's ability to meet the 12/17 standard.

In January 2018, DCS engaged the Child Welfare Policy and Practice Group (CWG) to complete an assessment of the agency's internal operations with identified strengths and opportunities. In its final report, released in June 2018, CWG made 20+ recommendations for addressing specific organizational and management challenges within DCS. CWG identified several efficiencies that should, over time, reduce the number of FCMs needed to best care for children.

- **Lean Principles** - DCS is applying lean principles and working to implement CWG recommendations that will decrease FCM workload by improving the structure of support staff in local offices. DCS recognizes that this work is never complete, and as such, the Department will continue to evaluate ways to make changes in the future to better serve Hoosier children and families.
- **Launched Online Background Check Portal** – DCS digitized its background check process, significantly reducing turnaround time. The new online portal – used to screen applicants including teachers, volunteers and others seeking to work with children – launched on June 4, 2018. The portal replaced pen-and-paper submission procedures and will decrease the average processing time from 21 days to 10. Reduced waiting time will help potential employers make sound decisions about applicants who want to work with youth.
- **Foster Parent Recruiting Campaign** – DCS and former Indianapolis Colts Head Coach and Pro Football Hall of Famer Tony Dungy kicked off a new partnership with All Pro Dad, the fatherhood program of Family First, to help raise awareness and recruit foster families across the state. The partnership will help us find even more people who want to offer the extraordinary gift of being a foster parent for the thousands of children who can no longer live in their own home. The campaign's statewide



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effort will include TV and radio PSAs, digital advertising, billboard and targeted events across Indiana.

- **Supervisor to Family Case Manager Ratio** - The Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) standard for front-line supervisors is one to five. The best child welfare systems are those in which supervisors have the time, knowledge, and skill to develop and support excellent casework practitioners and to recognize complex case situations and oversee them in a way that avoids the oversights or missteps that often lead to families being referred or even to tragedy. DCS supervisors had between six and eleven family case managers under their supervision.
- **Over-Centralization of Decision Making** – There is an over-centralization of decision making related to both policy and financial issues. Local DCS staff are closest to the families and communities which they serve and they know best how resources should be used and case decisions made. DCS created a decentralization work group co-chaired by two local office directors to make recommendations in regard to what policy and spending decision making now held centrally should be delegated to the county level.

## **OBJECTIVES FOR THE FY 2020 – 2021 BIENNIUM**

During the next biennium, DCS has five primary objectives:

- 1. Implement recommendations provided from Child Welfare Policy and Practice Group (CWG) assessment findings in alignment with DCS goals.**

CWG provided 20+ recommendations to improve overall operations of DCS. Over the next 2 years, initiation and sustainment of the recommendations will take place.

- 2. Improve performance and quality of service through employee retention.**

DCS will enhance the current recruitment plan to remain competitive in the current job market and ensure a sufficient pool of qualified, competent, and committed candidates. DCS will expand retention efforts



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to include a statewide retention campaign and will implement innovative strategies to promote employee recognition and incentivize long-term commitment. The FCMs comprise the largest portion of the DCS team.

Having supervisor support appropriate for the workload is an important factor in retaining FCMs. CWG recommends a 1:5 supervisor to FCM ratio as best for providing the necessary coaching and staffing for cases. Mentors, peer coaches, regional training, competitive salaries all contribute to supporting the frontline work in the child welfare realm. A competitive career advancement program for front line staff with a comprehensive leadership development program will reward the current staff in the child welfare field operations. Retaining the frontline staff will improve timeliness to permanency for children in care.

### **3. Execute DCS goals in tandem with the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) to transform DCS.**

According to DCS' trauma-informed prevention plan and in compliance with the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA), prevention services will be evidence –based and children will only be placed in residential care if needed and at facilities with best practices in place. FFPSA is part of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018, signed by President Trump on February 9<sup>th</sup>. One of the major areas FFPSA will impact is the way Title IV-E funds can be used. Title IV-E funds previously could be used only to help with the costs of foster care maintenance for eligible children in eligible placements; administrative expenses to manage the program; and training for staff, foster parents, and certain private agency staff; adoption assistance; and kinship guardianship assistance. Now states, territories, and tribes with an approved Title IV-E prevention plan have the option to use these funds for prevention services that would allow children who are candidates for foster care to stay with their parents or relatives.

### **4. Information technology improvements for the Child Support Bureau**

For this budget cycle, Indiana will be re-launching its procurement to replace Indiana's statewide child support system (ISETS). This procurement will ultimately result in a system called INvest that will 1) take advantage of newer technology, 2) provide a more user-friendly experience for child support workers as well as employers, custodial and



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non-custodial parents, and 3) meet federal program and security requirements.

## 5. Enhance child welfare technology to support data driven decision making and best practices for child and family outcomes.

DCS will take the necessary steps to ensure that the child welfare system is Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System (CCWIS) compliant. This includes development and implementation of a data quality plan and data exchanges with key partners.

### **KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

These metrics measure progress toward meeting DCS's overarching mission to protect children from abuse and neglect, and to ensure their financial support.

- **Percent of current child support collected:** *The amount of money collected for current support in Title IV-D cases divided by the total amount owed for current support in Title IV-D cases during the year ended each quarter.*
  - August 2018 = 66.2 %
  - Target = 66.5 %
- **Absence of repeat maltreatment:** *The percent of children with no substantiated maltreatment after DCS involvement in last 12 months.*
  - June 2018 = 90.02 %
  - Target = 95 %
- **Out of Home CHINS time to permanency:** *Percent of children in out of home placement achieving permanency in 24 months.*
  - June 2018 = 76.4 %
  - Target = 85%
- **Placements per Child:** *The percent of children in out of home placements with two or less total placements.*
  - June 2018 = 61.8 %
  - Target = 70 %
- **In Home CHINS time to permanency:** *Percent of children that remained in the home achieving permanency within 12 months.*



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- June 2018 = 71.6 %
- Target = 87 %

## **ORGANIZATION CHART**

See attachment.

## **PROGRAMS TO BE REDUCED, ELIMINATED, OR REPLACED**

No programs or services for children will be reduced, eliminated, or replaced.

## **REALLOCATION OF FUNDS**

No funds are planned to be reallocated.

## **FY 2020 - 2021 INITIATIVES**

DCS requests the following change package:

### **1. Personal Services - \$8.58 Million**

The annual employee evaluation process resulted in pay for performance raises in the middle of FY 2018 which coincide with benefit increases. Similar impact is expected in FY 2019. We request an increase in our appropriation to cover the impact and continue recognizing and rewarding our team members for meeting and exceeding the job duties as required for their role.

All of the efforts taken in the last biennium to improve the manner in which child welfare and child support services are administered in Indiana and the new initiatives planned for SFY 2020/21 will continue to help the Department effectively serve Hoosier children and their families.



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