
Child Protective Services (CPS) Caseload Study Committee

2019-21 Recommended Biennial Budget Request

Request:

- ***\$30 million dollar increase*** to the Child & Family Aids (CFA) Allocation for each year of the biennium. The increased funding should be allocated to counties and used flexibly as needed to: (1) cover out-of-home care expenses; (2) hire additional staff; or (3) otherwise cover expenses allowable under the CFA Allocation.
- The funding would be significant enough to begin to stabilize Wisconsin's child protective services (CPS) system (providing relief for surging out-of-home care costs and allowing counties to begin making strides at addressing workload issues) while a viable long-term financing structure for the Wisconsin CPS system can be explored.
- Along with the increased funding request, statutory language should be explored to create a regular ***legislative reporting mechanism***. Under this mechanism, an appropriate State agency would regularly prepare a report coinciding with the biennial budget process that could be used as a basis for making adjustments to the CFA allocation. The report would provide data on CPS trends and impacts on local expenditures, the level of county overmatch to the CFA allocation and workload. It would compare current CPS workload levels with national caseload standards or the results of any Wisconsin CPS workload study.

Key Calculations:

- **\$30.4 million:** The increase in county levy expenditures for child welfare services between 2011 and 2016.
 - Out-of-home care expenses alone have increased for counties by approximately **\$15 million** between 2013 and 2017
 - Counties' overmatch for the Calendar Year 2016 Children and Family Aids allocation exceeded **1,600 percent**.

- **\$36.8 million:** The cost of hiring the additional CPS caseworkers and supervisors needed to meet the obligations of the CPS system as determined by WCHSA's adopted caseload standards.
 - Current caseload to social worker ratio for the balance of state (BOS: 1 social worker per 15 cases** or 30 children per case)
 - Recommended caseload standard: 1 social worker per 10 cases
 - To bring ratio into alignment an additional 327 new workers are needed, cost: **\$24.5 million**
 - If the maximum child per worker ratio for the Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services (DMCPS) were used, the cost would be substantially higher
 - Current social worker to supervisor ratio for the BOS: 1 supervisor for every 7 social workers
 - Recommended caseload standard: 1 supervisor for every 5 social workers
 - To bring ratio into alignment an additional 145 new supervisors are needed, cost: **\$12.3 million**
 - The Governor's Opioid Task Force has recommended an increase to the Children and Family Aids Allocation so that counties are able to hire additional CPS workers to address the surge in casework that has resulted from the opioid epidemic.
 - Continuing to operate with such extreme workloads poses liability risks for both counties and the State.

**Case is defined as a family unit