

Accreditation: 60-Day Report

February 21, 2023 – April 21, 2023

This 60-day report by the RI Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) is submitted to the General Assembly in accordance with Article 1 as amended of Public Law 2021-162. The report describes progress made in implementing the accreditation plan filed in accordance with RIGL 42-72-5.3 and includes any projected changes needed to effectuate that plan.

KEY ACTIVITIES

Execution of the Department’s divisional project plans continues to be the primary focus as DCYF moves into the final year of its “Self Study” phase of work with the Council on Accreditation (COA). As a reminder, the Self Study is the largest and longest component of the COA process wherein DCYF will implement its plans for policy, practice, programmatic, and operations changes to achieve all COA standards.

Key achievements during the reporting period have included:

- Completion of a department-wide logic model
- Establishment of workgroups to develop new education materials targeted at birth parents and their children
- Implementation of performance reviews for non-union staff
- Improvements to the exit interview process to capture more information from employees who leave the Department
- Adoption of new procedures to ensure consistent tracking and reporting of training hours for staff

In March, the Department also initiated the “Stakeholder Survey” phase of accreditation. This required phase provides an opportunity for various types of child welfare stakeholders to anonymously provide their viewpoints on perceived strengths and challenges of the Department. COA analyzes the responses and provides a report to the Department on findings later in the process. Thus far, 176 staff within the Department and among our contracted service providers have participated.

Overall, the Department remains on target to achieve COA accreditation by the summer of 2024.

STAFFING PROGRESS

The Department continues its focus on backfilling existing vacancies, with an emphasis on filling vacant frontline positions. The Department currently has 631 FTEs, compared with 585 in October 2021, for a net gain of 46 employees.

The Department has 24 vacancies for social caseworkers in our Family Service Units (FSU) division. There are approximately 40 candidates scheduled to take the next civil service exam. The Department will begin to hire those who pass the exam in anticipation of a new training academy class to start the first week of July.

The Department has 12 vacancies for child protective investigators. DCYF is expecting to soon receive up to 12 names from the most recent civil service exam and will prepare to onboard as many as possible into the new training academy class, scheduled for the first week of July.

In anticipation of exhausting both civil service exam lists, the State intends to announce new exams for both the Social Caseworker II and Child Protective Investigator positions on May 7.

The Department also continues to look at attrition; see Table 1 below. As of April 21, a total of 21 employees have left the Department in calendar year 2023.

Table 1. Attrition of All DCYF Staff, by Calendar Year and Reason for Leaving

Reason for Leaving	Calendar Year					
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Bumped	0	0	3	0	1	0
Deceased	2	1	2	0	2	0
Failure to Pass Probation	7	1	1	0	0	0
Leave Return	0	1	0	4	1	0
Resignation	25	31	26	27	62	10
Retirement	16	18	20	24	5	3
Termination	4	5	7	5	10	2
Transfer In State	28	36	21	19	29	6
Transfer Out of State	2	0	0	0	0	0
Total	84	93	80	79	110	21

CASELOAD INFORMATION

Figures 1 and 2 below show the average number of families (cases) assigned to a Family Service Units (FSU) caseworker, by Month. In Figure 1, only caseworkers carrying 14 or more cases are included in the calculation so as to exclude new workers still in training/probation or otherwise not carrying a full caseload. Figure 2 depicts caseworkers carrying 10 or more cases to include those nearing the end of their probation.

Figure 1. Average Number of Cases Assigned to FSU Caseworker, by Month (14+ Cases)

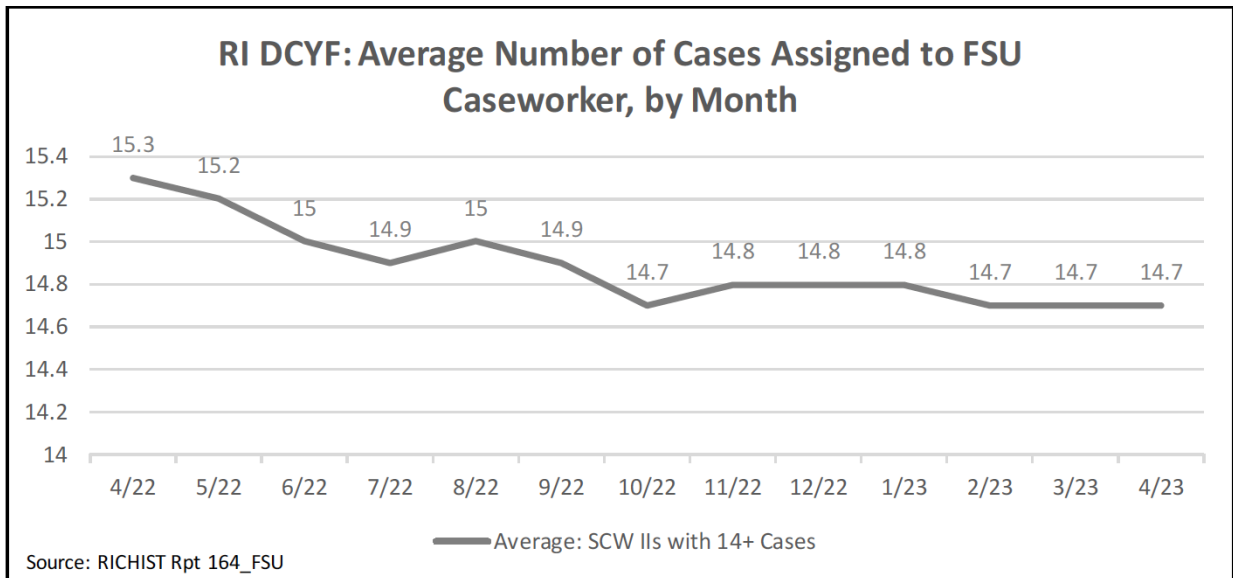
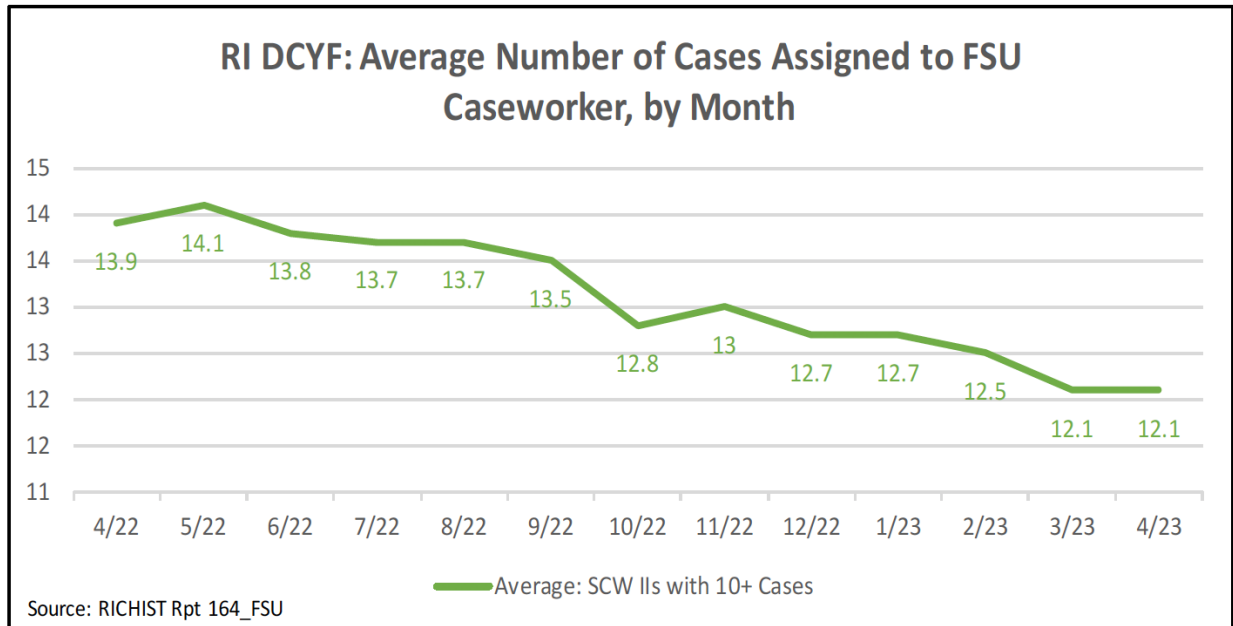


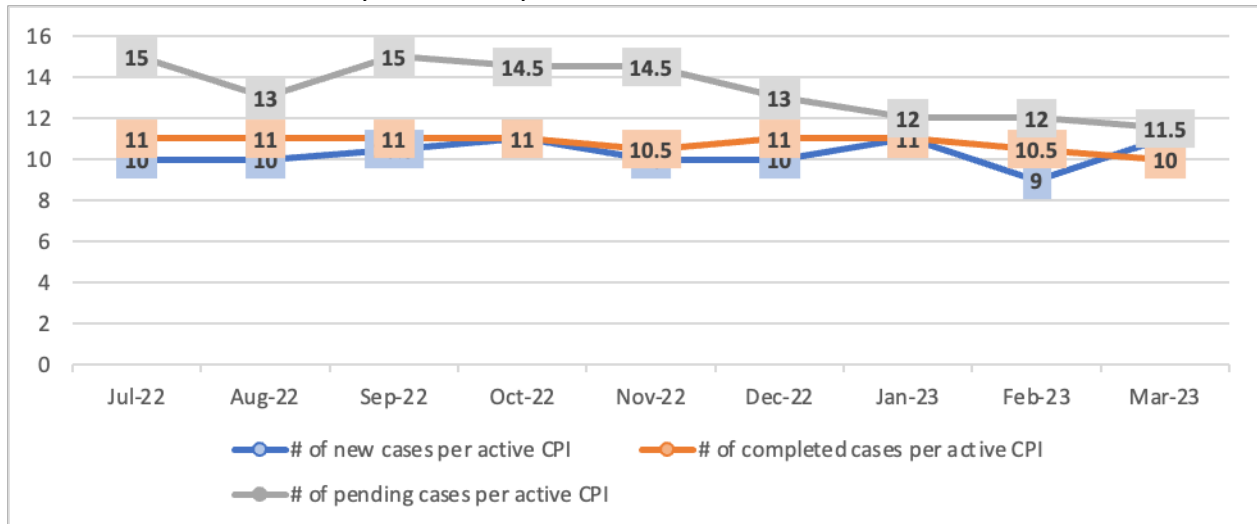
Figure 2. Average Number of Cases Assigned to FSU Caseworker, by Month (10+ Cases)



As a comparison: on March 1, 2020, just prior to the pandemic, the Department had an average of 15.4 cases per caseworker (10+ chart); as of the end of April 2023, the Department was at 12.1 cases per caseworker.

Figure 3 below shows that the Child Protective Services (CPS) investigators are receiving a median of 11 new investigations per month (blue line), which is the same number as reported in the previous 60-day report. The median number of pending cases per child protective investigator (CPI) is 11.5 (grey line), which is a decrease from 12 as reported in the previous 60-day report.

Figure 3. Median caseloads (new, completed, and pending investigations per active CPI*), by month, July 2022 to March 2023, RI DCYF



Data notes: Source-RPT 259, 500

*Active investigator: investigator who had 8 or more investigations in a month.

As we continue to fill vacancies and complete training of new staff hired in 2022, the Department anticipates further caseload reductions for both social caseworkers and child protective investigators in calendar year 2023.

EXPENDITURES TO DATE

Table 2 below displays expenditures by statutory program from July 1, 2021, through March 31, 2023. Table 3 breaks down accreditation costs by expenditure type for this same period.

Table 2. Accreditation Expenditures by DCYF Statutory Program, SFY 2022 and SFY 2023

Program	Expenditures, in Dollars, Through 3/31/23
Central Management	662,000
Children's Behavioral Health	239,900
Child Welfare	12,746,135
Grand Total	13,648,035

Table 3. Accreditation Expenditures by DCYF Expenditure Type, SFY 2022 and SFY 2023

Expenditures Type	Expenditures, in Dollars, Through 3/31/23
Salary and Benefits	12,883,561
Contract Professional Services	2,500
Operating Supplies and Expenses	236,953
Capital Purchases and Equipment	525,021
Grand Total	13,648,035

NEXT STEPS

During the next reporting period, the Department will continue the Self Study and will continue a series of workgroups that are tackling some of the more complex standards. It is likely that a couple of divisions may become the first to complete their plans during the next reporting period.

The Department also intends to complete the required Stakeholder Survey phase of accreditation during the next reporting period. To complete this step, DCYF will issue the survey to all foster parents, funders, and a randomized group of youth and parents served by the agency.