



# Accreditation: 60-Day Report

## February 16, 2024 – April 16, 2024

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 2023-079. 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 the Department is the completion of the "Self Study" phase of work. 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.

In consultation with COA, the Department has taken an extension on its timeline to submit Self Study evidence from April 8 to September 23. The planned Site Visit is now rescheduled for the week of November 18, 2024. The purpose of the extension is to extend the amount of time needed to implement all the changes, and to account for the vacations typically taken by staff during the summertime. A fee of \$500 was assessed for rebooking the Site Visit. After COA conducts its Site Visit, the Department will be given an accreditation decision.

The Department continues its extensive review of its operating procedures, and the creation of new procedures where needed. In the end, the Department will have written or amended nearly 60 policies operating procedures.

During the reporting period, the Department finalized and published a new framework and policy for supervision practices across the Department. The intent is to provide staff with clear and consistent supervision expectations that will help with workforce development, staff retention, and improved outcomes for our families.

Aside from the policy work, the Department is working to complete several other COA projects:

- Publishing new education materials targeted at birth parents and their children. This includes materials that will be provided to families at the time of investigation to help explain the process and rights and responsibilities of the family members. It also includes creating guidebook for parents and children who are receiving case management through the Department.
- Refining community-based resource lists to support staff in connecting families to relevant resources.
- Completing several key plans for the Department, including:
  - a Risk Prevention and Management Plan, and related annual assessments;

- a Community Engagement plan for calendar year 2024; and
- an interim Resource Development Plan as the Department prepares to engage with an external partner to conduct a comprehensive needs assessment related to its service array.

**STAFFING PROGRESS**

The Department continues its focus on backfilling existing vacancies, with an emphasis on its filling vacant frontline positions. As of April 22, the Department has 654 FTEs filled, as compared to 585 FTEs in October 2021, for a net gain of 69 employees.

The Department has 9 vacancies for social caseworkers in our Division of Family Services (DFS). One Social Caseworker II position has been filled; this new hire will begin in May. The Department has civil service exams planned for the end of April and anticipates filling the remaining positions in July.

The Department has 11 vacancies for child protective investigators. The Department has civil service exams planned for the end of April and anticipates filling the remaining positions in July.

The Department also continues to look at attrition; see table below. A total of 12 employees left the Department in calendar year 2024 to date.

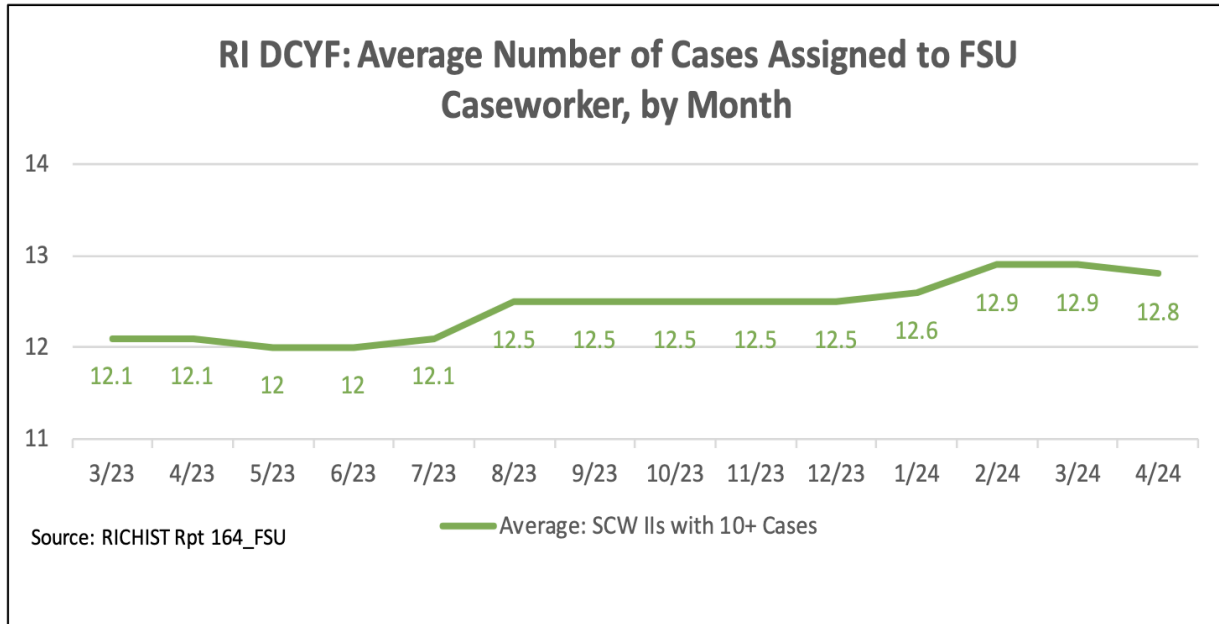
**Table.** Attrition of All DCYF Staff, by Calendar Year and Reason for Leaving

Reason for Leaving	Calendar Year						
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Bumped	0	0	3	0	1	1	0
Deceased	2	1	2	0	2	2	0
Failure to Pass Probation	7	1	1	0	0	1	0
Leave Return	0	1	0	4	1	1	0
Resignation	25	31	26	27	62	32	5
Retirement	16	18	20	24	5	12	2
Termination	4	5	7	5	10	7	1
Transfer In State	28	36	21	19	29	27	4
Transfer Out of State	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>12</b>

**CASELOAD INFORMATION**

Figure 1 below shows the average number of families (cases) assigned to a DFS caseworker, by month. This figure depicts caseworkers carrying 10 or more cases to include only experienced workers and new caseworkers who are nearing the end of their probationary period.

**Figure 1.** Average Number of Cases Assigned to DFS Caseworker, by Month (10+ Cases)

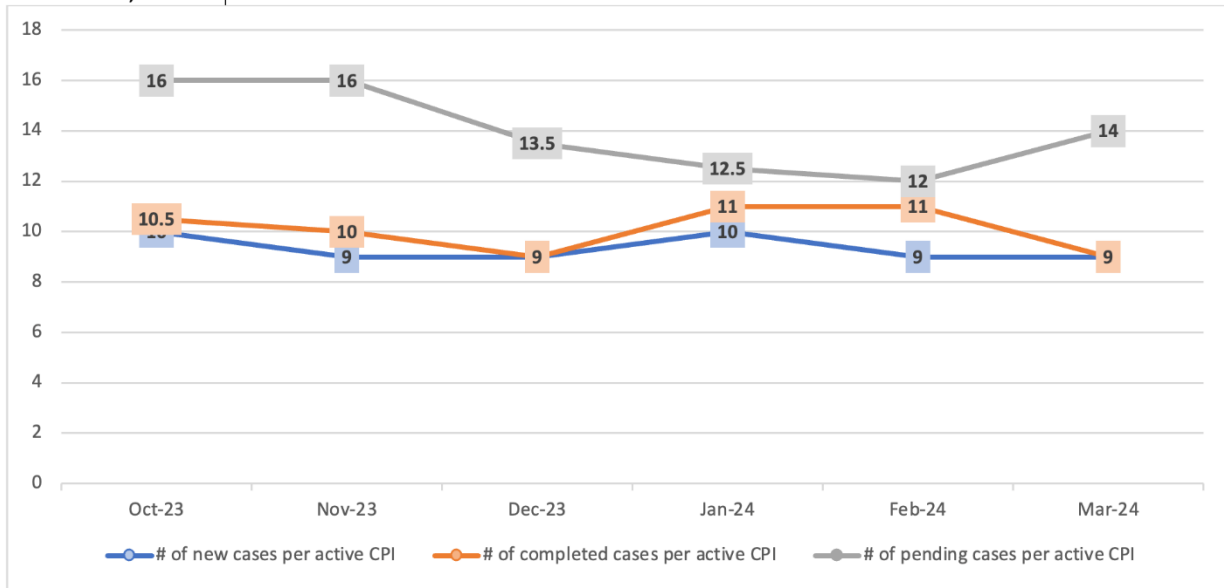


As a comparison: on March 1, 2020, just prior to the pandemic, the Department had an average of 15.4 cases per caseworker; as of the beginning of April 2024, the Department was at 12.8 cases per caseworker. During the last reporting period, caseload sizes decreased slightly. Further decreases in caseload sizes are expected as the Department continues to fill its frontline vacancies and train recent hires made during the reporting period.

COA’s personnel standard suggests that a DFS worker’s caseload “should have no more than 15 total families with no more than 10 children in out-of-home care.” The Department has adequate FTE resources available to meet the COA standard.

Figure 2 below shows that the Child Protective Services (CPS) investigators are receiving a median of 9 new investigations per month (blue line), which is a decrease from the 10 cases as reported in the previous 60-day report. The median number of pending cases per child protective investigator (CPI) is 14 (grey line), which is an increase from the 12.5 as reported in the previous 60-day report.

**Figure 2.** Median caseloads (new, completed, and pending investigations per active CPI\*), by month, October 2023 to March 2024, 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 existing vacancies, the Department anticipates further caseload reductions for child protective investigators. COA’s personnel standard suggests that CPS investigators’ caseloads “generally do not exceed 12 active investigations at a time, including no more than 8 new investigations per month.” The Department has adequate FTE resources available to meet the COA standard.

### NEXT STEPS

Over the next reporting period, the Department anticipates that it will have completed nearly all its policy and planning work required for accreditation. With a majority of the Department’s new and updated operating procedures already complete, the Department is increasingly focusing on staff education and implementation between now and the November Site Visit.

As divisions across the Department conclude their Self Study work, the internal COA Team is helping to organize their evidence and prepare it for submission.