



## **Report to the Legislature**

# **Social Worker Workload**

Final Report  
November 2008

Department of Social & Health Services  
Children's Administration  
and  
Washington Federation of State Employees



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# **Social Worker Workload Final Report to the Legislature November 2008**

## **Introduction**

The 2008 budget bill, ESHB 2687, Chapter 329, Laws of 2008, Section 202(23), requires the Department of Social and Health Services, Children's Administration (CA) and the Washington Federation of State Employees (WFSE) to work together to address social workers (SW) workload.

The legislation states:

“The department shall work with the exclusive bargaining representative for the children's administration social workers to prioritize social worker tasks and devise methods by which to alleviate from the social workers' workload lower priority tasks. Discussions and methods shall include the use of contracting services and home support specialists. The department and the bargaining representative shall jointly report their efforts to the appropriate committees of the legislature by submitting a progress report no later than July 1, 2008, and a final report by November 15, 2008.”

CA management staff and WFSE members from CA and their representatives are committed to this effort and to restructure work for case carrying social workers to more efficiently meet critical needs. In October 2007, CA and WFSE agreed to use statewide ad hoc Union Management Communications Committee (UMCC) meetings to discuss critical initiatives for child welfare. When the legislature required CA and WFSE to jointly work on social worker workload issues, both parties agreed to use the UMCC framework to meet the legislative directive.

CA and WFSE met eleven days during the last six months to prioritize social worker tasks and discuss alternatives to alleviate lower priority tasks from social worker workloads. In past years social workers have had to absorb tasks previously performed by other staff due to reductions. In addition, other requirements, such as new federal and state laws and Braam implementation plan mandates have added to the workload.

While reviewing tasks that case carrying social workers currently perform, we found no work that could be eliminated completely. All tasks are required, but not all are required to be performed by case carrying social workers. Many could be done by other staff or contracted out. If we had sufficient staff to move these tasks, workload would be balanced between case carrying social workers and other staff that had been “unbalanced” during previous reductions in resources. It will also make more time available for case carrying social workers to focus on tasks that are critical to their mission of safety, permanency and well being of the children and families they serve.

We also reviewed the impact of FamLink, the new State Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS), on the tasks identified as possible to remove from social workers. FamLink will allow staff to input information in a more structured and thorough manner. In many cases FamLink will help streamline documentation and make information processing time more productive.

This report describes the agreed upon assumptions, the process used, the resulting prioritized groups of social worker tasks and the alternative methods discussed for reducing lower priority tasks from case carrying social workers workload.

### **Agreed Upon Assumptions**

The committee agreed on the following assumptions to guide the discussions and help select a preferred option for identified tasks included in this report.

- Child Safety continues as the top priority for everything we do.
- A gap exists between available resources and workload requirements.
- Workload cannot be substantially reduced by efficiencies alone.
- It is necessary to continually respond to new competing external/internal mandates.
- Increased permanency planning will yield positive child outcomes.
- Staff retention and recruitment impacts workload issues.
- Increased communication with staff about initiatives, policy and procedure modifications is necessary.
- The current level of services will be maintained.

The purpose of our effort is to provide options to policy makers concerning a more balanced allocation of workload and prioritization for social workers.

There are ongoing efforts to reduce workload through efficiencies and streamlining work in each region. However, these efforts will not save enough time for a case carrying social worker to accomplish the important work they are mandated to do or that good practice dictates. Additional resources will be needed to remove work from social workers. Detailed information is provided in Attachment 2 for each task identified to be reassigned from case carrying social workers to other staff.

### **Process**

- Agreed on meeting dates, group process, and the use of facilitators at meetings.
- Reviewed efficiencies and streamlining efforts completed and continuing in each region.
- Identified tasks that could be done by non case carrying staff or by contracting with providers.
- Used the CA 2007 Workload Study to help identify tasks that would save time if moved from social workers' workload.
- Requested comments and input from field staff on proposed tasks to move and for additional ideas.
- Incorporated input from staff into our work.
- Prioritized tasks of case carrying social workers (CCSW) into three groups:

- High priority = need to be performed by CCSW;
  - Medium priority = could be moved or partially moved from CCSW; and
  - Lower priority = not required to be done by CCSW and should have considerable workload reduction for CCSW.
- Reviewed increased use of technology (such as FamLink) to help staff with work.
  - Discussed alternative options to accomplish lower priority tasks.
  - Determined a preferred option to accomplish lower priority tasks.

### **Core Tasks for Case Carrying Social Workers**

The committee identified the following major tasks as high priority tasks and mandatory for case carrying social workers to continue to perform. Descriptions for each are in Attachment 1.

- Face-to-Face Visits
- Health and Safety Monthly Visits
- Court Attendance
- Safety Assessment and Planning
- Risk and Family Assessment and Service Planning
- Preparation and Participation at Shared Planning Meetings
- Documentation of Social Worker Activities, Decisions and Findings
- Maintaining Relationships with Caregivers
- Internal Staffings and Meetings
- Phone Consultation and Engagement with clients and families
- Generate Child Protective Service (CPS) Referrals
- Collateral Contacts
- Communication and Correspondence
- Continuing Education and Training

### **Tasks to Shift from Case Carrying Social Workers With Significant Workload Impact**

The committee identified 12 tasks that should have considerable time savings if removed from case carrying social workers' (CCSW) workload. These tasks are summarized below including our preferred option for how each task would be done if removed from CCSWs' workload. Tasks are described in more detail in Attachment 2. These tasks are not listed in any particular order.

Each region approaches efficiencies differently, depending on available resources, geography and other regional differences. For example, some regions developed specialized units to help with home studies while others contracted for more transportation and supervised visits. The status below captures, on a statewide basis, an estimated percent of how much of the work is still done by CCSWs after implementing efficiencies. What is clear is that the amount of required work far exceeds the capacity of Children's Administration staff to complete. The regions have implemented what they can within available resources to alleviate the workload for CCSW workloads. However, there are still more resources needed to complete the work in a timely and complete way.

The percentage estimates below are as of October 2008.

#### **A. Home Studies**

Description: Home studies assess whether a placement is safe, suitable, and is a match which adequately meets a child's needs. This process includes: application, background checks, and three meetings, one of which must be held in the prospective placement's home. The interview process includes family history, victimization, parenting philosophy, economic resources and family functioning.

- Preferred Option: A combination of using specialized social worker 3s and contracted services.

WFSE's position is that removing work to contractors would result in a workload reduction; however the cost of contracting was not analyzed by the workgroup to determine if the cost was more or less than hiring sufficient FTEs. As such, the WFSE's position is that employees may choose to exercise any rights they may have to the competitive process as prescribed under RCW 41.06.142. WFSE believes that if an Employee Business Unit (EBU) is formed, if the EBU is paid with additional resources received for the contract, the employees' former salary and benefits may then be available to the agency to replace those workers.

- Anticipated Benefits and Costs: Significant workload reduction. Savings by using less costly staff when available. May be partially offset if additional staff are needed or for contracts. Resource availability varies by region.

Status: What percent of work do CCSWs do?

- We estimate a statewide average of about 45% of Home Studies is done by CCSWs.

#### **B. Discovery, Public Disclosure and Adoption Disclosure**

Description: Responding to requests of public disclosure or discovery to see and receive copies of files and other information.

- Preferred Option: Centralized unit of specially trained staff, such as forms and records analysts.
- Anticipated Benefits and Costs: Significant workload reduction. Cost for additional staff. FamLink will help streamline the process.

Status: What percent of work do CCSWs do?

- We estimate a statewide average of about 50% of Discovery and Disclosure is done by CCSWs.

#### **C. Client Transportation for Services and Visits**

Description: Pick up, transport, and return of clients.

- Preferred Option: A combination of using CA staff i.e., Social Worker 1s, Home Support Specialists and Community Workers, case aides and caregivers, supplemented by public transportation and contracting as needed and available.

- Anticipated Benefits and Costs: Significant workload reduction. Additional cost for contracts and staff. Resource availability varies by region.

Status: What percent of work do CCSWs do?

- We estimate a statewide average of about 25% of Client Transportation is done by CCSWs.

#### **D. Payments**

Description: After a request for services is written, a payment request is submitted for approval, then for payment. FamLink release 1 will automate payment paperwork and remove this task from the social worker.

- Preferred Option: FamLink will handle about 80 percent - 85 percent of workload. Fiduciary Specialists are anticipated to take care of the last 15 percent - 20 percent.
- Anticipated Benefits and Costs: Significant workload reduction. No additional cost.

Status: What percent of work do CCSWs do?

- We estimate a statewide average of about 25% of Payments is done by CCSWs.

#### **E. Relative Search**

Description: Relative search includes: Search through program records, internet and other means for relatives or contacts to help find relatives. Conduct initial interviews and screens of relatives located to identify those who can help with the child and those who may be possible placements, and ensure a good transition to the assigned social worker.

- Preferred Option: Use Customer Service Specialists, social work interns, or clerical staff to locate relatives and contacts. Use designated SW3 relative search specialists for screening and initial interviews of relatives. Contract with Support Enforcement for data searches only.
- Anticipated Benefits and Costs: Reduce social worker workload. Cost to add Relative Search Specialists. With increased relative placements, stability of placements should increase.

Status: What percent of work do CCSWs do?

- We estimate a statewide average of about 75% of Relative Search is done by CCSWs.

#### **F. Background Checks**

Description: Complete all steps of background check process.

- Preferred Option: Social worker continues to do emergent National Criminal Information Center (NCIC) checks. Clerical perform non-emergent checks.
- Anticipated Benefits and Costs: Significant workload reduction. Savings by using less costly staff. May be partially offset if additional staff are needed.

Status: What percent of work do CCSWs do?

- We estimate a statewide average of about 35% - 40% of all Non-Emergent Background Checks is done by CCSWs.

## **G. Filing**

Description: Case specific filing of correspondence, reports received, printed material from client files, relevant emails and other items.

- Preferred Option: Use clerical staff to perform this task.
- Anticipated Benefits and Costs: Significant workload reduction. Savings by using less costly staff. May be partially offset if additional staff are needed.

Status: What percent of work do CCSWs do?

- We estimate a statewide average of about 80% of filing is done by CCSWs.

## **H. Medical (non-emergent) and School Records Search**

Description: Obtain annual, or as needed, medical records and school reports for children in out-of-home care. (This is not the initial record gathered by Child Education and Health Tracking (CHET) screeners and public health nurses.)

- Preferred Option: Trained clerical staff will gather records from medical providers and schools.
- Anticipated Benefits and Costs: Significant workload reduction. Savings by using less costly staff. May be partially offset if additional staff are needed.

Status: What percent of work do CCSWs do?

- We estimate a statewide average of about 90% of Non-Emergent Medical and School records search is done by CCSWs.

## **I. Parent/Child Visits**

Description: Supervising or monitoring visits between parents and children.

- Preferred Option: Contract with outside agencies, hire staff that specialize in supervising visits, expect and pay foster parents and relatives to provide visits.

WFSE's position is that removing work to contractors would result in a workload reduction; however the cost of contracting was not analyzed by the workgroup to determine if the cost was more or less than hiring sufficient FTEs. As such, the WFSE's position is that employees may choose to exercise any rights they may have to the competitive process as prescribed under RCW 41.06.142. WFSE believes that if an Employee Business Unit (EBU) is formed, if the EBU is paid with additional resources received for the contract, the employees' former salary and benefits may then be available to the agency to replace those workers.

- Anticipated Benefits and Costs: Significant workload reduction. Provides flexibility in regions. Savings by using less costly staff or foster parents. May be partially offset if additional staff are needed.

Status: What percent of work do CCSWs do?

- We estimate a statewide average of about 20% of Parent/Child Visits is done by CCSWs.

## **J. Due Diligence**

Description: The effort to contact all birth and alleged parents, and all adult relatives to notify them of a child's placement and the legal proceedings.

- Preferred Option: Use trained clerical support staff to do the search.
- Anticipated Benefits and Costs: Significant workload reduction. Savings by using less costly staff. May be partially offset if additional staff are needed.

Status: What percent of work do CCSWs do?

- We estimate a statewide average of about 90% of Due Diligence Search is done by CCSWs.

## **K. Serving Notices and Petitions**

Description: Personally deliver court-related documents into recipients' hands and prepare accurate, complete records of service.

- Preferred Option: Use contracted process servers unless social worker is serving the document at the same time as doing another function.
- Anticipated Benefits and Costs: Significant workload reduction. Cost savings using a process service, offset by cost of contracts.

Status: What percent of work do CCSWs do?

- We estimate a statewide average of about 90% of Serving Notices and Petitions is done by CCSWs.

## **L. Placement Paperwork**

Description: Court related records, agreements and informational materials need to be gathered for the receiving family. Electronic and hard copy records are required to document and authenticate placements.

- Preferred Option: Have paperwork completed by clerical or other appropriate classifications. FamLink will streamline data entry.
- Anticipated Benefits and Costs: Significant workload reduction. Savings by using less costly staff. May be partially offset if additional staff are needed.

Status: What percent of work do CCSWs do?

- We estimate a statewide average of about 90% of Placement Paperwork is done by CCSWs.

## **Tasks to Shift from Workload With Moderate Workload Impact**

The committee identified 9 tasks that may have some impact on case carrying social workers if removed or partially removed from their workload. These tasks and our preferred options are:

### **M. Establishing Tribal Contacts**

Description: CA social workers are responsible for determining whether a child is affiliated with an Indian tribe, band, or nation.

- Preferred Option: Specialize investigation of membership status with Social Worker 3 staff.
- Anticipated Benefits and Costs: Significant workload reduction. Cost for additional staff.

Status: What percent of work do CCSWs do?

- We estimate a statewide average of about 65% of Establishing Tribal Contacts is done by CCSWs.

### **N. Reporting Monthly Statistics**

Description: Compile hand counts of information in areas of outcomes, shared planning staffings, GAIN SS (a mental health and substance abuse assessment), case counts, cases assigned or closed, productivity, and others.

- Preferred Option: FamLink release 1 will automate almost all statistical gathering, therefore eliminating most hand counts except for some Braam requirements.
- Anticipated Benefits and Costs: Significant reduction in workload. By using FamLink there will be no additional cost.

Status: What percent of work do CCSWs do?

- We estimate a statewide average of about 30% of Reporting Monthly Statistics is done by CCSWs.

### **O. Coordinating Referrals for Services**

Description: Identify service needs of clients and identify contracted providers to perform the services. Request approval for funding from Supervisor, send the referral for services to the provider, and make payment arrangements to the provider. FamLink release 1 will automate this task for CCSW.

- Preferred Option: Put current contract providers on CA intranet so all Social Workers and Fiduciary Specialists can refer to this list, until FamLink goes live. Use Fiduciary Specialists or other support to send funding approval notice to provider and make payment arrangements.
- Anticipated Benefits and Costs: Significant reduction to SW workload. No additional cost if use existing resources to put contracts on intranet.

Status: What percent of work do CCSWs do?

- We estimate a statewide average of about 100% of Coordinating Referrals for Services is done by CCSWs.

## **P. Access and Coordination of State Cars and Equipment**

Description: Storage and check-out of state cars, infant or booster seats, cameras, audio recorders and related equipment that social workers need to travel and to conduct investigations, family visits and related tasks away from the office.

- Preferred Option: Have administrative support staff check out cars and round up needed equipment when social workers make a verbal request. Set up a locked storage area with a simple automated system for social workers to sign keys and equipment out and in (if space available).
- Anticipated Benefits and Costs: Saves significant social worker time by not having to round up a car and equipment at the time of appointment. Savings using less costly staff, partially offset if there is any software cost or additional staff needed. Reduced loss of equipment.

Status: What percent of work do CCSWs do?

- We estimate a statewide average of about 55% of Access and Coordination of State Cars and Equipment is done by CCSWs.

## **Q. Writing Petitions**

Description: Preparing and writing two types of court petitions; dependency and termination.

- Preferred Option: Short term - Social Worker 3 retains writing dependency petitions; Social Worker 3 no longer required to produce extensive written referrals for AAGs who then write termination petitions. Long Term - seek resources for AAGs to write dependency petitions and hire legal secretaries within CA to draft dependency petitions.
- Anticipated Benefits and Costs: Significant workload reduction. AAGs already do this in some offices, others may need more resources.

Status: What percent of work do CCSWs do?

- We estimate a statewide average of about 85% of written referrals to the AAGs for Termination Petitions is done by CCSWs.

## **R. Care of Children in Offices**

Description: Children are in need of supervision in DCFS offices primarily because they have been removed from their homes and are waiting for a placement to be located.

- Preferred Option: Use Home Support Specialists (HSS), Social Work Program Specialists, Social Worker 1, or work study case aides. Develop contracts with local licensed child care agencies for emergencies.
- Anticipated Benefits and Costs: Significant workload reduction. Additional cost to contract with providers for child care and retainer fees. May need additional FTEs if this can't be absorbed into current workload. HSS or SW1 are experienced with our clients.

Status: What percent of work do CCSWs do?

- We estimate a statewide average of about 50% of Care of Children in Offices is done by CCSWs.

#### **S. Parenting Plans Related to Custody Issues**

Description: When children are placed with relatives or a parent who does not have legal custody, a parenting plan must be filed with the court in order to give the caregiver legal authority to protect the child from a parent who is considered a threat to the child.

- Preferred Option: Create contracts with local family courts to facilitate parenting plans and pay for court costs and publication expenses.
- Anticipated Benefits and Costs: Workload reduction for social workers. Costs to contract. Court facilitators exist in some counties. Additional cost if more court facilitators are needed.

Status: What percent of work do CCSWs do?

- We estimate that approximately 250 cases could be closed if parenting plans were done in a timely manner. We are addressing this issue by working with our partners in the courts, Office of Public Defense, Prosecuting Attorneys, Attorney General's Office and private attorneys for short-term and long-term solutions

#### **T. Developing Child Information Packets for Specific Services**

Description: Workers must search through files and service episode records to fill out necessary history on a child or family. The information from the record is put into packets that help determine where a child is placed and the services that a family might need or be eligible for. These packets are made for services such as Behavioral Rehabilitative Services (BRS), Children's Long-term Inpatient Programs (CLIP), and Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC).

- Preferred Option: Hire Social Worker 1s or college interns to complete.
- Anticipated Benefits and Costs: Savings if lower cost staff used. Offset if need to hire additional staff. FamLink will help by being able to create and review content online and print packages more efficiently.

Status: What percent of work do CCSWs do?

- We estimate a statewide average of about 98% of Developing Child Information Packets is done by CCSWs.

#### **U. Returning Phone Calls**

Description: Following up with callers who leave insufficient information to determine need; redirecting callers to appropriate resource or contact; providing basic information.

- Preferred Option: Use Customer Support Specialists, Social Worker 1, college interns, Home Support Specialists or administrative support staff to make follow-up calls.
- Anticipated Benefits and Costs: Savings if use less costly staff.

Status: What percent of work do CCSWs do?

- We estimate a statewide average of about 98% of Phone Calls are Returned by CCSWs.

To facilitate the discussion and decision making of the group, a detailed description form was completed for the 21 tasks described above. Attachment 2 includes all completed task description forms.

The form includes:

- A description of what work the task includes.
- Who currently performs the task.
- Criteria for why the task was selected.
- Options for how to accomplish removing the task.
- A short analysis to show possible benefits and costs

### **Summary**

This report presents 21 preferred options for tasks that can be eliminated or partially eliminated from case carrying social workers' workload.

The CA Ad Hoc UMCC, consisting of WFSE bargaining unit members and CA managers, met about twice per month for six months to discuss social worker tasks in response to a legislative proviso. The group developed a list of tasks that case carrying social workers perform regularly, usually on a daily basis. The workload study indicated that case carrying social workers need relief because there is more work than there are work hours in a week and the committee found this is still true today. It is clear that case carrying social workers have an extremely large and varied workload that can't be reasonably done in a 40 hour work week. Although new resources have been provided, it has not been enough to keep up with the increasing demands from internal and external mandates.

It is clear from the work of this committee that:

- There are no tasks that can be eliminated completely and still continue to provide children and their families with necessary social services.
- Management and staff have implemented workload efficiencies.
- The roll out of FamLink, after an initial adjustment and transition period, will have a positive impact on social workers documentation. FamLink will help streamline documentation and make information processing time more productive.
- Additional resources or decreased requirements are necessary for reducing workload.
- Many options will require new resources to implement.
- CA employees will always continue to place the safety, health, and well being of the children and families we serve as the top priority.

We would like to thank the Legislature for the opportunity to work together on this very important workload issue.

## **Committee Membership**

The DSHS Children's Administration and the Washington Federation of State Employees met as an Ad Hoc Union Management Communication Committee (UMCC) from May 2008 - October 2008 to provide this Report to the Legislature.

The CA Ad Hoc UMCC members thank Mike Millholland and Steve Bolton, The Boeing Company for their expert facilitation skills that kept the group focused on producing results.

### **Members of the Ad Hoc UMCC**

#### **Children's Administration Leadership Team**

Cheryl Stephani, Assistant Secretary  
Deborah Purce, Executive Staff Director  
Randy Hart, Acting Director, Field Operations  
Bernice Morehead, Acting Director, Program and Practice Improvement  
Chris Robinson, Clinical Director, Practice Model  
Dawn Tatman, Director, Children's Administration Technology Services  
Keith Phillips, Director, Finance and Operations Support  
Marty Butkovich, Regional Administrator, Region 1  
Ken Nichols, Regional Administrator, Region 2  
Yen Lawler, Deputy Regional Administrator, Region 3  
Joel Odimba, Regional Administrator, Region 4  
Nancy Sutton, Regional Administrator, Region 5  
Myra Casey, Regional Administrator, Region 6

#### **WFSE Staff**

Randy Lorello, Eastern Field Office Supervisor  
Jeanine Livingston, Contract Compliance Director

#### **Regional WFSE Members**

Robert Tadlock, Region 1  
Ron Smith, Region 2  
Faye Anderson, Region 3  
Roberta Chiles, Region 4  
Balinda McDonald, Region 5  
Bob Mumford, Region 6

#### **Resource Staff**

##### **Children's Administration Headquarters**

Linda Johnson  
Ginny Heim

##### **DSHS Labor Relations Office**

Nikki Barnard

## Attachment 1

### Tasks to be Retained by the Social Workers

- **Collateral Contacts:** Social workers make phone calls or have direct contact with teachers, physicians, referents, relatives, service providers, attorneys, law enforcement, and others. These individuals provide information for assessments as well as observations of family functioning. The information they provide is critical to decision-making concerning child safety, permanency and well-being issues.
- **Communication and Correspondence:** Social workers access email daily. This has become the primary mode of communication with service providers, co-workers and management, foster families and families. Daily access is important for communication of important events with client families, caregivers, and internal issues.
- **Continuing Education and Training:** Social workers must keep up with the latest information in their specific areas and keep current on their skills and abilities to ensure the best quality service for children and families. Per CA administrative policy, they must complete 20 hours of continuing education each year. Social workers also use unit meetings for training and refer to policies and procedures through the CA Intranet Web Site to get information on specific topics. Review of these policies and procedures helps social workers meet performance expectations and social work standards.
- **Court Attendance:** For children who require the protection and oversight of the court, the social worker must report to the court at least every six months as to the child's well-being, progress of the individuals addressing the issues which brought the child into care, and progress towards permanency. Social workers are required to be at these hearings as they have primary responsibility for the child.
- **Developing and Maintaining Relationships with Caregivers and Other Involved Supporting Adults:** Caregivers of children in state custody have primary responsibility for meeting the basic needs of children. Without support, these placements are more likely to disrupt, causing further problems for children. Social workers are the most appropriate to provide this support as they have case planning responsibility and are the most familiar with the child and their family situation. This relationship is integral to the role of the social worker.
- **Documentation of Social Worker Activities, Decisions and Findings:** As in any profession, social workers are expected to document their work. This is done in the state management information system. Although time consuming, direct documentation is more accurate, can be better used in court proceedings, and is as efficient as giving this work to others to complete. Documentation must be completed on investigations, case activity, findings, and other information about cases. All documentation must be completed in order to close cases.

- **Face to Face Contacts:** To meet minimum requirements for a Child Protective Services (CPS) investigation, including safety and risk assessments, a social worker must interview all subjects and alleged victims. The social worker should also interview other children who reside in the home. This contact may occur at a variety of places including medical facilities, law enforcement facilities and schools.
- **Generate Child Protective Services (CPS) Referrals:** CA staff are mandated by law and policy to report suspicions of abuse or neglect. Each new incident of abuse or neglect requires its own report to CPS intake and law enforcement to assure appropriate screening for investigation.
- **Internal Staffings and Meetings:** Standard communication meetings are essential to any profession, as well as meetings that are program and client related, and internal case consultation. Social work practice includes a great amount of information gathering, sharing and analyzing. Because of the critical and complex issues involved in public child welfare, the work cannot be completed in a quality way without substantial consultation and collaboration. Regular (at least monthly) meetings with supervisors are critical for good decision-making.
- **Monthly Visits:** Social workers, per federal and state statute, must have contact with children and caregivers on a monthly basis. The purpose is to monitor child safety and well-being and to further the permanent plan of each child. Visits occur with any family active with CPS, Family Voluntary Services, Family Reconciliation Services or Child and Family Welfare Services (CFWS), including adoptions. They also occur whether the child resides in out-of-home care or in-home with the parents. These visits must take place in the child's residence the majority of the time so the interaction of the child with the caregiver can be observed.
- **Phone Consultation and Engagement with Clients and Families:** Quality investigations, case planning and assessments require gathering information from the broadest possible sources. By gathering as much information as possible and consulting with clients and professionals involved in the case, the best possible decision can be made at each decision point.
- **Preparation and Participation at Shared Planning Meetings with Family and Community Professionals** (i.e., Family Team Decision Making (FTDM), Child Protection Teams (CPT), Local Indian Child Welfare Advisory Committee (LICWAC), Dependency Case Conferences, and Permanency Planning Staffings): There are a number of forums in which the department meets with families to jointly develop the case plan. These include meeting with representatives from Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), Guardian Ad Litem (GALs), community professionals, family advocates, and support persons. These meetings are important for early and continued engagement of the immediate and extended families. At the meeting, plan progress is reviewed and a determination is made about services meeting the families' needs. Social workers must participate in these as they are responsible for case planning and engagement of the family and are a major source of information for the other participants.

- **Risk and Family Assessment and Service Planning:** Social workers are expected to conduct an assessment of family functioning to determine risk of future abuse or neglect. While safety focuses on immediate safety threats, family assessment has a more long-term look at the risk for future maltreatment of children. Service plans are created with the family to address the risk issues identified.
- **Safety Assessment and Planning:** Safety of children is the top priority for all CA staff. In CPS, safety assessment and planning is done with all families investigated for child abuse and neglect allegations. In CFWS, all families create a safety plan in collaboration with the social worker prior to the child reunifying with the family. Safety plans include the involvement of persons outside the family, normally with at least one mandated reporter involved.

## Attachment 2

### A. HOME STUDIES

**DESCRIPTION:** Home studies are intended to assess whether a placement is safe, suitable, and is a match which adequately meets a child's needs. This process includes: application, background checks, and three meetings, one of which must be held in the prospective placement home. The interview process includes family history, victimization, parenting philosophy, economic resources, and family functioning. Types of Home Studies include: Adoption, Relative/Kinship, Courtesy Supervision, and Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children (ICPC).

**CURRENTLY PERFORMED BY:** Social Worker 3 - by the assigned case carrying social worker, by specialized SW 3 in a specialized unit, occasionally by a contracted provider in cases of conflict of interest, high profile, backlog, or Limited English Proficiency.

**CRITERIA:** Criteria were developed to help prioritize each task. A rating of 1 to 5 was given in three areas:

*Ease of implementation:* 1 = hard to implement; 5 = easy to implement

*Impact on Social Worker workload:* 1 = no reduction to workload; 5 = significant reduction

*Impact to Family/child:* 1 = negative impact; 5 = no or positive impact

If a task is moved from social workers workload, a total rating of 15 (5 for each criteria) means the task would make a significant positive impact; a total rating of 3 means it would not make much of an impact.

Total: 13

- Ease of implementation: 5
- Impact on Social Worker workload: 5
- Impact to Family/Child: 3

#### **OPTIONS:**

##### **1. Use Specialized Social Worker 3s**

###### **Pros**

- a. Expertise is already there
- b. Objective, minimize potential conflict of interest

###### **Cons**

- a. May need more staff resources
- b. Not available in small offices

##### **2. Contract Out with Individuals**

###### **Pros**

- a. No additional FTEs
- b. Available in most communities
- c. Quality assurance required by contract

- d. Many contracts with individuals have excess capacity and low overhead

**Cons**

- a. Would need additional resources for contracts that may be less than, the same as, or greater than hiring classified staff.
- b. May need additional contract monitors
- c. Initial training of contractors regarding contract expectations

**3. Contract with Child Placing Agencies (CPA)**

**Pros**

- a. No additional FTEs
- b. Have expertise and ability
- c. These organizations already have a clear business relationship with us.

**Cons**

- a. Still need to do prep work
- b. Some CPAs may not have capacity
- c. Might divert them from their mission of foster home resource development

WFSE's position is that removing work to contractors would result in a workload reduction; however the cost of contracting was not analyzed by the workgroup to determine if the cost was more or less than hiring sufficient FTEs. As such, the WFSE's position is that employees may choose to exercise any rights they may have to the competitive process as prescribed under RCW 41.06.142. WFSE believes that if an Employee Business Unit (EBU) is formed, if the EBU is paid with additional resources received for the contract, the employees' former salary and benefits may then be available to the agency to replace those workers.

**PREFERRED OPTION:** A combination of Option 1 - Using specialized social workers 3s, Option 2 - Contract out with individuals, and Option 3 - Contract with CPAs (depending on availability in region and office.) May vary by region depending on the cost of contracted services in a given area.

**CURRENT STATUS:** What percent of work do CCSWs do?

We estimate a statewide average of about 45% of Home Studies is done by CCSWs.

**COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS:** Reduce SW workload; may increase cost and FTE if use Specialized SW staff; contracting may not result in savings or efficiency, need to consider by region.

**MEASUREMENT OF SUCCESS:** Reduce SW workload, reduce backlog of Home Studies, shorten completion time of home studies, increase permanent plans, shorten time to permanency, and shorten length of stay for children in care.

## **B. DISCOVERY, PUBLIC DISCLOSURE & ADOPTION DISCLOSURE**

**DESCRIPTION:** Client and others make requests to see, and have copies made of, files and other information pertaining to the requests. These requests are made because of litigation, adoption, CPS court cases and other reasons. The worker has to copy, redact, and if asked, send to the requester all information obtained above. This can be from 50 pages up to 10000+ pages (adoptions) of information.

Disclosure is when a state agency must provide to the public any public record, unless that record is specifically exempt. Discovery is the provision of documents to other parties of a lawsuit, not the public at large. Discovery includes documents in the client file, emails, audio or video tapes, photographs, internal memos, etc.

**CURRENTLY PERFORMED BY:** Social worker 3 and 4, clerical positions, records specialists.

**CRITERIA:** Criteria were developed to help prioritize each task. A rating of 1 to 5 was given in three areas:

*Ease of implementation:* 1 = hard to implement; 5 = easy to implement

*Impact on Social Worker workload:* 1 = no reduction to workload; 5 = significant reduction

*Impact to Family/child:* 1 = negative impact; 5 = no or positive impact

If a task is moved from social workers workload, a total rating of 15 (5 for each criteria) means the task would make a significant positive impact; a total rating of 3 means it would not make much of an impact.

Total: 15

- Ease of implementation: 5
- Impact on Social Worker workload: 5
- Impact to Family/Child: 5

### **OPTIONS:**

- 1. Form a unit of specially trained staff. Most regions have hired Forms and Record analysts who were converted from other positions (program manager positions, clerical positions and non-case carrying SW positions).**

#### **Pros**

- a. Regions have already started centralizing this function
- b. Will be more consistent in quality
- c. FamLink will reduce workload slightly

#### **Cons**

- a. Requires additional FTEs

- 2. Contract Out**

#### **Pros**

- a. Would use no new FTEs
- b. Responsibility of task would be shared

**Cons**

- a. This is highly technical and highly confidential work - may not be able to find contractors in all regions
- b. Additional cost for contracts

**3. Move to another agency or elsewhere in DSHS (AAGs, Prosecuting Attorney, HQ, or other DSHS program)**

**Pros**

- a. More skilled at legal documentation

**Cons**

- a. Additional cost in resources or in FTEs for another agency
- b. CA staff will need to continue to do prep work
- c. Coordination may prove to be very time intensive

**PREFERRED OPTION:** Option 1 - Centralized unit of specially trained staff. Regions have already begun to use centralized units. FamLink will help streamline this process.

**CURRENT STATUS:** What percent of work do CCSWs do?

We estimate a statewide average of about 50% of Discovery and Disclosure is done by CCSWs.

**COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS:** Reduce SW workload. May be additional cost for specially trained staff.

**MEASUREMENT OF SUCCESS:** Reduce SW workload. Reduce backlog of discovery and disclosure requests.

## **C. CLIENT TRANSPORTATION FOR SERVICES & VISITS**

**DESCRIPTION:** Pick up, transport, and return of client/child for visits and services, i.e., mental health, doctor, dentist, and others.

**CURRENTLY PERFORMED BY:** Social worker 1, 2, 3, and 4, home support specialists, community workers, contracted providers, relatives and foster parents, case aides, volunteers

**CRITERIA:** Criteria were developed to help prioritize each task. A rating of 1 to 5 was given in three areas:

*Ease of implementation:* 1 = hard to implement; 5 = easy to implement

*Impact on Social Worker workload:* 1 = no reduction to workload; 5 = significant reduction

*Impact to Family/child:* 1 = negative impact; 5 = no or positive impact

If a task is moved from social workers workload, a total rating of 15 (5 for each criteria) means the task would make a significant positive impact; a total rating of 3 means it would not make much of an impact.

Total: 15

- Ease of implementation: 5
- Impact on Social Worker workload: 5
- Impact to Family/Child: 5

### **OPTIONS:**

#### **1. Public Transportation**

##### **Pros**

- a. Cost savings
- b. Ease of access, depending on location
- c. Reliable
- d. Scheduled

##### **Cons**

- a. Availability depends on location
- b. Public transportation is not very flexible in scheduling
- c. Clients may be afraid to take bus and it may not be age appropriate for some clients
- d. Younger clients will need an escort which adds to the cost

#### **2. Use social worker 1, Home Support Specialists, and Community Support Specialist**

##### **Pros**

- a. Management assigned and flexible
- b. Develop region specific models using different classifications and teams
- c. Minimize liability when using state staff
- d. State staff can be trained so they have appropriate skills and abilities, which would provide consistent service

**Cons**

- a. Additional resources may be needed for staff
- b. Hard to adjust for workload peaks and lows in smaller offices

**3. Contract out**

**Pros**

- a. Availability / on call for workload peaks
- b. Medicaid brokerage services are a possibility to provide this service

**Cons**

- a. Contract monitoring workload will increase
- b. Additional resources needed to fund contract

**4. Combination of 1, 2 or 3**

**Pros**

- a. Flexibility
- b. Adaptable to geography and available resources
- c. Quick solutions and implementation

**Cons**

- a. Inconsistent cost
- b. Additional resources needed

**PREFERRED OPTION:** Option #4 - combination of all options. Use primarily state staff, i.e., Social Worker 1s, Home Support Specialists and Community Workers, supplemented by public transportation and contracting as needed and available.

**CURRENT STATUS:** What percent of work do CCSWs do?

We estimate a statewide average of about 25% of Client Transportation is done by CCSWs.

**COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS:** Reduce SW workload. Savings by using less costly staff. May be partially offset if additional staff are needed. Staff and provider availability varies by region. Resource options not always available.

**MEASUREMENT OF SUCCESS:** Reduce SW workload. More consistent and regular visits for children and families.

## **D. PAYMENTS**

**DESCRIPTION:** When a client needs services, a social worker will write a request for services and submit it for approval and payment. This process may vary slightly from region to region. FamLink will automate this process and greatly relieve the workload on social workers.

**CURRENTLY PERFORMED BY:** Social Worker 3 and Fiduciary Specialists

**CRITERIA:** Criteria were developed to help prioritize each task. A rating of 1 to 5 was given in three areas:

*Ease of implementation:* 1 = hard to implement; 5 = easy to implement

*Impact on Social Worker workload:* 1 = no reduction to workload; 5 = significant reduction

*Impact to Family/child:* 1 = negative impact; 5 = no or positive impact

If a task is moved from social workers workload, a total rating of 15 (5 for each criteria) means the task would make a significant positive impact; a total rating of 3 means it would not make much of an impact.

Total: 15

- Ease of implementation: 5
- Impact on Social Worker workload: 5
- Impact to Family/Child: 5

FamLink will automate about 80 - 85 percent of payment duties. The other 20 - 25 percent is expected to be completed by Fiduciary Specialists.

### **OPTIONS:**

#### **1. Fiduciary Specialists will complete payment tasks not done by FamLink.**

##### **Pros**

- a. Use Existing FTEs
- b. Significant time savings for SW
- c. Payments will be consistent and done by knowledgeable staff

##### **Cons**

- a. None

**PREFERRED OPTION:** Option 1 - Fiduciary Specialists will complete payment tasks not done by FamLink.

**CURRENT STATUS:** What percent of work do CCSWs do?

We estimate a statewide average of about 25% of Payments is done by CCSWs.

**COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS:** Significant reduction to SW workload. No additional cost. Use existing resources of FamLink and Fiduciary Specialists.

**MEASUREMENT OF SUCCESS:** Reduce SW workload. Increase payment accuracy and timeliness.

## **E. RELATIVE SEARCH**

**DESCRIPTION:** A two level function that (1) searches for relatives or contacts to find relatives through program records, internet and other searches and (2) conducts initial interviewing and screening of located relatives to identify those who are willing to help with the child(ren), are potential placements, and to ensure good transition of information and contact/relationship to the assigned SW.

**CURRENTLY PERFORMED BY:** Case Carrying SW 3, SW 3 Relative Search Specialists, Financial Support Specialists 4 (initial search only), some Home Support Specialists and interns

**CRITERIA:** Criteria were developed to help prioritize each task. A rating of 1 to 5 was given in three areas:

*Ease of implementation:* 1 = hard to implement; 5 = easy to implement

*Impact on Social Worker workload:* 1 = no reduction to workload; 5 = significant reduction

*Impact to Family/child:* 1 = negative impact; 5 = no or positive impact

If a task is moved from social workers workload, a total rating of 15 (5 for each criteria) means the task would make a significant positive impact; a total rating of 3 means it would not make much of an impact.

Total: 14

- Ease of implementation: 5
- Impact on Social Worker workload: 4
- Impact to Family/Child: 5

### **OPTIONS:**

- 1. Search for relatives or contacts to find relatives. Use Customer Service Specialists (CSS), social work interns or clerical staff to locate.**

**Screen and perform initial interviews of relatives. Use relative search specialists (SW 3)**

#### **Pros**

- a. Savings using lower cost staff
- b. Increased relative placement
- c. Some regions have centralized the relative search function already
- d. Better able to devote uninterrupted time to perform this task
- e. Possible shorter time to permanency
- f. Specialists can be training resource for other staff

#### **Cons**

- a. Social worker disconnected from initial contacts
- b. Specialists do not know child(ren)
- c. Transition may require some duplication of effort
- d. Need additional resources

**2. Contract with Support Enforcement for data search to locate contacts.**

**Pros**

- a. Takes advantage of department expertise and database
- b. Small cost to CA

**Cons**

- a. Will be an additional cost, though small

**PREFERRED OPTION:** Option 1 - Use CSSs, social work interns or clerical staff to locate potential contacts; and SW 3s as a relative search specialist; and Option 2 - contract with OSE for data searches only.

**CURRENT STATUS:** What percent of work do CCSWs do?

We estimate a statewide average of about 75% of Relative Search is done by CCSWs.

**COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS:** Reduce social worker workload. Cost to add Relative Search Specialists. Increased relative placements which should increase stability of placements.

**MEASUREMENT OF SUCCESS:** Increased relative placements. Permanency, and reduced length of stay.

## **F. BACKGROUND CHECKS**

**DESCRIPTION:** Complete all steps of background check process for CPS investigations and for emergent and non-emergent relative or significant adult placements.

**CURRENTLY PERFORMED BY:** Case carrying Social worker and clerical at various levels

**CRITERIA:** Criteria were developed to help prioritize each task. A rating of 1 to 5 was given in three areas:

*Ease of implementation:* 1 = hard to implement; 5 = easy to implement

*Impact on Social Worker workload:* 1 = no reduction to workload; 5 = significant reduction

*Impact to Family/child:* 1 = negative impact; 5 = no or positive impact

If a task is moved from social workers workload, a total rating of 15 (5 for each criteria) means the task would make a significant positive impact; a total rating of 3 means it would not make much of an impact.

Total: 13 and 14

- Ease of implementation: 4
- Impact on Social Worker: Emergent (NCIC) SW to perform: 5
- Non-emergent Clerical to perform: 4
- Impact on Family/Child: 5

### **OPTIONS:**

#### **1. Social Worker 3 continues to perform background checks**

##### **Pros**

- a. Social worker has first hand knowledge of actions and progress
- b. FamLink documentation may be easier
- c. NCIC emergent checks completed by social workers provide timely, necessary information

##### **Cons**

- a. For non-emergent requests, there are many detailed steps that require follow up and tracking to ensure background checks are completed correctly
- b. CAMIS documentation is very complicated to complete correctly
- c. Additional follow up documentation will still be needed with FamLink. Social workers may lose track of these requirements

#### **2. Clerical staff perform - Office Assistant 3 or Secretary Senior**

##### **Pros**

- a. Will have completion of background checks as a major job assignment
- b. Familiarity and repetition will increase accuracy of all steps in process
- c. This is a routine task that is most appropriate for this job classification

**Cons**

- a. Processing NCIC emergent checks may delay results getting to social worker
- b. Locating staff resources may be challenging in small offices

**PREFERRED OPTION:** Partial Option 1 - Social worker retains emergent NCIC check, and Partial Option 2 - Social worker refers requests for fingerprint completion to clerical for non-emergent placements.

**CURRENT STATUS:** What percent of work do CCSWs do?

We estimate a statewide average of about 35% - 40% of all Non-Emergent Background Checks is done by CCSWs.

**COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS:**

**Investigations and emergent placements (NCIC check and CAMIS check):** Social workers already perform this task. Information is critical and time sensitive. More time would be required by social worker to delegate this duty than to complete it.

**Non-emergent placements (Fingerprints and CAMIS):** Clerical have the appropriate skill set for this precise but repetitive duty. Additional clerical FTEs may be needed. Some training time is needed due to specific requirements of this task.

**MEASUREMENT OF SUCCESS:** Workload reduction for social workers. Fingerprints completed timely and accurately.

## **G. FILING DOCUMENTS**

**DESCRIPTION:** Case specific filing of correspondence, reports received, printed Service Episode Records (SERs), relevant emails and other documents.

**CURRENTLY PERFORMED BY:** Social Worker 3, Clerical, Work Study/Case Aides,

**CRITERIA:** Criteria were developed to help prioritize each task. A rating of 1 to 5 was given in three areas:

*Ease of implementation:* 1 = hard to implement; 5 = easy to implement

*Impact on Social Worker workload:* 1 = no reduction to workload; 5 = significant reduction

*Impact to Family/child:* 1 = negative impact; 5 = no or positive impact

If a task is moved from social workers workload, a total rating of 15 (5 for each criteria) means the task would make a significant positive impact; a total rating of 3 means it would not make much of an impact.

Total: 15

- Ease of implementation: 5
- Impact on Social Worker: 5
- Impact on Family/Child: 5

### **OPTIONS:**

#### **1. Use clerical staff**

##### **Pros**

- a. Will save SW time
- b. Is an appropriate job class for this task
- c. Costs less per FTE
- d. Efficient once hired and trained

##### **Cons**

- a. May add FTEs
- b. Not a desirable job if the only task

#### **2. Use Case Aides and Volunteers**

##### **Pros**

- a. Recruit potential employees
- b. Opportunity for exposure to work world
- c. Costs less per FTE or no FTE cost

##### **Cons**

- a. High Turnover
- b. Limited available hours
- c. Need to repeat training frequently to avoid inconsistency
- d. Requires a support infrastructure for recruitment, orientation, and other tasks
- e. Volunteers, per the CBA, cannot supplant state employee work

### 3. Use Home Support Specialists or Social Worker 1

#### Pros

- a. Less cost
- b. Fast and efficient when trained

#### Cons

- a. Not most appropriate class
- b. Would not be their primary assignment - intermittent availability
- c. SW 1 would not be an in training classification to move to a SW 2

**PREFERRED OPTION:** Option 1 - Use clerical staff

**CURRENT STATUS:** What percent of work do CCSWs do?

We estimate a statewide average of about 80% of Filing is done by CCSWs.

**COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS:** Significant workload reduction. Savings by using less costly staff. May be partially offset if additional staff are needed. Clerical staff are best suited for this task, may need additional clerical.

**MEASUREMENT OF SUCCESS:** Reduction in workload for CCSW. Filing is done in a timely manner.

## **H. OBTAINING MEDICAL DOCUMENTS (NON-EMERGENT) & SCHOOL RECORDS**

**DESCRIPTION:** CA social workers are responsible for obtaining medical records and school reports for children in out-of-home care. Obtaining these reports (for non-emergent purposes) is routine and does not require social work knowledge. Social workers will need to review the reports received to address any needs in case planning. Because of increased emphasis on these issues by the federal government through the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) and the Braam Settlement Agreement, the requirements to obtain these documents have increased.

When children initially enter out-of-home care, a Child Health and Education Tracking (CHET) screen is done. As part of this process, medical and school reports are gathered. This proposal is to set up a process where these records are gathered on an annual basis or as needed.

**CURRENTLY PERFORMED BY:** Case Carrying Social Worker 3, some relative search SW, clerical, and Home Support Specialists

**CRITERIA:** Criteria were developed to help prioritize each task. A rating of 1 to 5 was given in three areas:

*Ease of implementation:* 1 = hard to implement; 5 = easy to implement

*Impact on Social Worker workload:* 1 = no reduction to workload; 5 = significant reduction

*Impact to Family/child:* 1 = negative impact; 5 = no or positive impact

If a task is moved from social workers workload, a total rating of 15 (5 for each criteria) means the task would make a significant positive impact; a total rating of 3 means it would not make much of an impact.

Total: 13

- Ease of implementation: 5
- Impact on Social Worker workload: 5
- Impact to Family/Child: 3

### **OPTIONS:**

- 1. Specialize record gathering with clerical staff. (Could be combined with support for the CHET screeners, unit secretaries, and support for relative search staff)**

#### **Pros**

- a. Specialized staff will ensure records are requested annually or as needed
- b. When social workers change on cases, the records will still be requested and gathered for the social worker
- c. CA staff can record the information in FamLink
- d. Because a small number of staff are involved in the function, relationships will build between them and medical providers and school district staff
- e. This solution provides a focus on a Braam requirement and will also help prepare records for the CFSR

**Cons**

- a. The information needed to make these records requests is with the social worker and may not always be recorded in FamLink
- b. Assigned staff may need to contact foster parents to find out the information. This may require staff to determine whether Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT) screens have been completed or that there are problems with the child. They will need training on how to respond
- c. Need to ensure that the social worker has reviewed the records

**PREFERRED OPTION:** Option 1 - Specialized record gathering with clerical staff.

**CURRENT STATUS:** What percent of work do CCSWs do?

We estimate a statewide average of about 90% of Non-Emergent Medical and School records search is done by CCSWs.

**COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS:** Significant workload reduction. Savings by using less costly staff. May be partially offset if additional staff are needed.

**MEASUREMENT OF SUCCESS** Will need to determine from FamLink how this will be measured.

## **I. PARENT/CHILD VISITATION**

**DESCRIPTION:** All tasks involved in visits between parent(s) and children, including coordination of visits, transportation, supervision/monitoring of visits, debriefing children following visits, and reports of each visit. Visits can be supervised (someone in the room), monitored (someone outside the room watching), or transportation only. Courts are increasing the number of visits. We will need guidance regarding what “frequent visits” mean.

**CURRENTLY PERFORMED BY:** Case carrying social workers, contracted providers, social worker 1, home support specialists, community workers, work study students, relatives, and case aides

**CRITERIA:** Criteria were developed to help prioritize each task. A rating of 1 to 5 was given in three areas:

*Ease of implementation:* 1 = hard to implement; 5 = easy to implement

*Impact on Social Worker workload:* 1 = no reduction to workload; 5 = significant reduction

*Impact to Family/child:* 1 = negative impact; 5 = no or positive impact

If a task is moved from social workers workload, a total rating of 15 (5 for each criteria) means the task would make a significant positive impact; a total rating of 3 means it would not make much of an impact.

Total: 11

- Ease of implementation: 4
- Impact on Social Worker workload: 5
- Impact to Family/Child: 3

### **OPTIONS:**

#### **1. Add and expand contracts with outside providers.**

##### **Pros**

- a. Other people would be seeing the child and family, as well as the social worker
- b. Reduces workload significantly for social worker

##### **Cons**

- a. More contract monitoring to ensure safety and that reports are made to the agency.
- b. More difficult to monitor for quality
- c. Social workers will not see the children or families on their caseloads as often
- d. Additional cost for contracts and contract monitors
- e. If there is frequent provider staff turnover, children will not have the chance to get comfortable with one person

WFSE's position is that removing work to contractors would result in a workload reduction; however the cost of contracting was not analyzed by the workgroup to determine if the cost was more or less than hiring sufficient FTEs. As such, the WFSE's position is that employees may choose to exercise any rights they may have to the competitive process as prescribed under RCW 41.06.142. WFSE believes that if an Employee Business Unit (EBU) is formed, if the EBU is paid with additional resources

received for the contract, the employees' former salary and benefits may then be available to the agency to replace those workers.

**2. Hire social worker 1, home support specialist, or community service specialists who specialize in providing visits between children and their families.**

**Pros**

- a. Less expensive than hiring SW 3s and may be less expensive than contracting out
- b. DSHS will have more control over the training staff receive and paperwork they complete
- c. Communication in-house is easier than with contractors
- d. DSHS will have direct control over quality
- e. Does not require contract monitoring, though supervisors will be needed

**Cons**

- a. Requires an increase of FTEs for staff and supervisors
- b. Communication with social workers will need to be emphasized

**3. Expect and reimburse foster parents and relatives to provide visits.**

**Pros**

- a. Strengthens the relationship between caregivers which would support the child after placement is ended and child is reunified
- b. Helps transition the child between care and home
- c. The foster parents and kinship caregivers know the child and are in a better position to provide a debriefing for the child
- d. Provides better continuity of relationships for the child (fewer strangers)
- e. Decreases fear foster parents may have of the parent
- f. Provides an increased training opportunity for caregivers

**Cons**

- a. Not all visits can be supervised by caregivers because of safety, willingness, and conflicts.
- b. Additional cost to reimburse caregivers
- c. Foster parents and relatives are less likely to be comfortable with documentation, creating more difficulties with measurement
- d. Increased need for training for caregivers
- e. There will be fewer occasions where others see the child besides the caregivers and parents

**PREFERRED OPTION:** Option 1, 2, and 3 to provide the greatest flexibility for SWs and for the child and family. The option would depend on the type of visit as safety is always our first concern.

Explore with the Legislature what best practice indicates for the frequency of visits, what it would take to fund that level, and to limit the visits that the department will provide to that number. Additional visits can be arranged through the family's support networks.

**CURRENT STATUS:** What percent of work do CCSWs do?

We estimate a statewide average of about 20% of Parent/Child Visits is done by CCSWs.

**COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS:** Significant workload reduction for case carrying social workers. Allows flexibility for regions and offices to provide this task. Savings by using less costly staff. Offset by additional staff needed.

**MEASUREMENT OF SUCCESS:** Workload reduction for social workers. More documented visits between parents and children.

## J. DUE DILIGENCE

**DESCRIPTION:** When a dependency is filed on a child, an effort must be made to contact all birth and alleged parents, and all adult relatives, to notify them of the placement and the legal proceedings. Often parents are not immediately available and their whereabouts are unknown. The duty of the department is to use available resources, including databases, to locate the parents.

**CURRENTLY PERFORMED BY:** Case carrying social workers complete this task in all but one region. In Region 5, following a successful pilot with the Office of the Attorney General, this was centralized using clerical and fiscal staff. There is regular access to more databases and the search meets all court standards.

**CRITERIA:** Criteria were developed to help prioritize each task. A rating of 1 to 5 was given in three areas:

*Ease of implementation:* 1 = hard to implement; 5 = easy to implement

*Impact on Social Worker workload:* 1 = no reduction to workload; 5 = significant reduction

*Impact to Family/child:* 1 = negative impact; 5 = no or positive impact

If a task is moved from social workers workload, a total rating of 15 (5 for each criteria) means the task would make a significant positive impact; a total rating of 3 means it would not make much of an impact.

Total: 13

- Ease of implementation: 5
- Impact on Social Worker workload: 3
- Impact to Family/Child: 5

### **OPTIONS:**

#### **1. Assign to trained clerical support staff to do the search function**

##### **Pros**

- a. Provides consistent access to up-to-date databases
- b. Allows relationships to be formed with key individuals at Division of Child Support (DCS), Department of Licensing, and other state agencies to help find the parents
- c. Could combine with other search tasks

##### **Cons**

- a. Requires agreement with the court to accept affidavits from someone other than the assigned social worker. This may be an issue as this divides the work of due diligence between the social worker and the trained clerical staff. Note: this was easily completed in Pierce County once the court understood the search would be more complete
- b. Needs additional resources

**2. Contract out the function to a search agency or Division of Child Support (DCS).**

**Pros**

- a. There is a national organization that completes searches and would be available for contract
- b. Division of Child Support also performs this function and, with additional resources, could complete the function for CA

**Cons**

- a. A contractor will not have access to FamLink
- b. Timeliness is very important. Contractors or DCS may not meet the timeframes
- c. Requires agreement with the court to accept affidavits from someone other than the assigned social worker. This may be an issue as this divides the work of due diligence between the social worker and the specialized staff. Note: this was easily completed in Pierce County once the court understood the search would be more complete
- d. Needs additional resource

**PREFERRED OPTION:** Option 1. Assign to trained clerical support staff.

**CURRENT STATUS:** What percent of work do CCSWs do?

We estimate a statewide average of about 90% of Due Diligence is done by CCSWs.

**COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS:** Reduces social worker workload. Savings if use less costly staff. Offset by additional resources needed

**MEASUREMENT OF SUCCESS** No current measure for the frequency or time costs of this function. If centralized, a count of completed searches and the success in finding the individual could be maintained.

## **K. SERVING NOTICES & PETITIONS**

**DESCRIPTION:** Personally deliver court-related documents into hands of parents or guardians and prepare accurate, complete records of service.

**CURRENTLY PERFORMED BY:** Case carrying Social Worker 3, some process servers and courier service.

**CRITERIA:** Criteria were developed to help prioritize each task. A rating of 1 to 5 was given in three areas:

*Ease of implementation:* 1 = hard to implement; 5 = easy to implement

*Impact on Social Worker workload:* 1 = no reduction to workload; 5 = significant reduction

*Impact to Family/child:* 1 = negative impact; 5 = no or positive impact

If a task is moved from social workers workload, a total rating of 15 (5 for each criteria) means the task would make a significant positive impact; a total rating of 3 means it would not make much of an impact.

Total: 11

- Ease of implementation: 5
- Impact on Social Worker workload: 3
- Impact to Family/Child: 3

### **OPTIONS:**

#### **1. Process service to parent or guardian performed by law enforcement or family court process servers.**

##### **Pros**

- a. Function will require less time overall because server not delayed for questions and interventions as are case carrying social workers
- b. Normal part of these workers' jobs

##### **Cons**

- a. Requires enabling legislation
- c. Additional cost for another agency to perform

#### **2. Use contracted process servers.**

##### **Pros**

- a. Function will require less time overall because server not delayed for questions and interventions as are case carrying social workers
- b. Normal part of these workers' jobs
- c. Does not require enabling legislation

##### **Cons**

- a. Additional cost
- b. Additional contract monitors may be needed
- c. Need monitoring to ensure records of service are returned in a timely manner

**3. Process service done by Customer Service Specialists or Home Support Specialists.**

**Pros**

- a. Function will require less time overall because server not delayed for questions and interventions as are SW 3s
- b. Does not require enabling legislation
- c. Supervisors can monitor to ensure records of service are returned in a timely manner

**Cons**

- a. None

**PREFERRED OPTION:** Option 2, Use contracted process servers where available. An exception will be made that social workers continue to do process service in the course of their normal duties if a document needs to be delivered at the time they have an appointment at the location.

**CURRENT STATUS:** What percent of work do CCSWs do?

We estimate a statewide average of about 90% of Serving notices and Petitions is done by CCSWs.

**COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS:** May be cost savings when using a process service instead of a social worker, offset by cost of contract.

**MEASUREMENT OF SUCCESS:** Notices and petitions served in a timely way, with no greater number of incidents than at present. Records of service returned timely.

## **L. PLACEMENT PAPERWORK**

**DESCRIPTION:** Gather together for receiving families, all court-related records, agreements and informational materials in the case file, including electronic records and hard-copy records required to document and authenticate placements.

**CURRENTLY PERFORMED BY:** Case Carrying Social Worker 3, some clerical, placement desk SWs

**CRITERIA:** Criteria were developed to help prioritize each task. A rating of 1 to 5 was given in three areas:

*Ease of implementation:* 1 = hard to implement; 5 = easy to implement

*Impact on Social Worker workload:* 1 = no reduction to workload; 5 = significant reduction

*Impact to Family/child:* 1 = negative impact; 5 = no or positive impact

If a task is moved from social workers workload, a total rating of 15 (5 for each criteria) means the task would make a significant positive impact; a total rating of 3 means it would not make much of an impact.

Total: 13

- Ease of implementation: 3
- Impact on Social Worker workload: 5
- Impact to Family/Child: 5

### **OPTIONS:**

#### **1. Use Secretary Senior, Customer Service Specialist, or other appropriate clerical support staff to complete paperwork.**

##### **Pros**

- a. More complete information, including up-to-date status reports, provided to foster parent at time of placement
- b. Potential for better quality of placements: Better, more complete information leads to better matches between child and foster home

##### **Cons**

- a. Possible overload on administrative support staff if additional resources are not funded
- b. More mistakes or omissions may occur

**PREFERRED OPTION:** Option 1. Use Secretary Senior, Customer Service Specialist, or other appropriate clerical support staff to complete paperwork.

**CURRENT STATUS:** What percent of work do CCSWs do?

We estimate a statewide average of about 90% of Placement Paperwork is done by CCSWs.

**COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS:** Workload reduction for case carrying social workers. Savings using less costly staff. May be offset by need for additional staff. FamLink will

provide pre-populated forms and streamline payment processes, which is part of the required paperwork.

**MEASUREMENT OF SUCCESS:** Foster parent satisfaction with timeliness and quality of information received. Could be measured by survey.

## **M. ESTABLISHING TRIBAL CONTACTS**

**DESCRIPTION:** In compliance with state and federal statute, CA social workers are responsible for determining whether a child is affiliated with an Indian tribe, band, or nation. It should be initiated upon our involvement with a family.

**CURRENTLY PERFORMED BY:** Case carrying social workers, clerical and non-case carrying social workers

**CRITERIA:** Criteria were developed to help prioritize each task. A rating of 1 to 5 was given in three areas:

*Ease of implementation:* 1 = hard to implement; 5 = easy to implement

*Impact on Social Worker workload:* 1 = no reduction to workload; 5 = significant reduction

*Impact to Family/child:* 1 = negative impact; 5 = no or positive impact

If a task is moved from social workers workload, a total rating of 15 (5 for each criteria) means the task would make a significant positive impact; a total rating of 3 means it would not make much of an impact.

Total: 15

- Ease of implementation: 5
- Impact on Social Worker workload: 5
- Impact to Family/Child: 5

### **OPTIONS:**

- 1. Centralize investigation of membership status (could be combined with staff who also specialize in due diligence or relative search). Specialized social worker 3s would perform the engagement function and clerical support would perform the search function.**

#### **Pros**

- a. Centralizes research of child's kin, their locations, and research of eligibility for membership in Indian tribes, bands or nations. The information and contacts needed for each of these functions is shared with other workers
- b. When social workers change on cases, the search function will continue seamlessly and information provided to the new social worker
- c. CA staff can record the information in FamLink
- d. Staff will have the opportunity to build relationships with tribal representatives
- e. A specialized worker will give continuity to tribal staff throughout the inquiry process

#### **Cons**

- a. The case carrying social worker will not do the initial contacts with relatives and tribes, losing this opportunity to begin to build relationships

**2. Specialize investigation of membership status with CA staff. (not centralized)**

**Pros**

- a. Provides one location to research the child's eligibility for membership in Indian tribes, bands, or nations
- b. When social workers change on cases, the search function will continue seamlessly and information provided to the new social worker
- c. CA staff can record information in FamLink
- d. Staff will have the opportunity to build relationships with tribal representatives
- e. A specialized worker will give continuity to tribal staff throughout the inquiry process

**Cons**

- a. The case carrying social worker will not do the initial contacts with relatives and tribes, losing this opportunity to begin to build relationships

**3. Contract for investigation of membership status.**

**Pros**

- a. This option provides one location to research the child's eligibility for membership in Indian tribes, bands or nations
- b. When social workers change on cases, the search function will continue seamlessly and information provided to the new social worker
- c. Contract staff will have the opportunity to build relationships with tribal representatives
- d. One contractor can work between regions

**Cons**

- a. Lack of access to CAMIS/FamLink makes documentation more difficult and will require CA staff to enter findings
- b. Initial contacts with relatives and tribes will be by an agency other than CA, losing this opportunity to begin to build relationships

**PREFERRED OPTION:** Option 1. Centralize investigation of membership status with staff (could be combined with staff who are also specialized in due diligence or relative search.) Specialized social worker 3s would perform the engagement function and clerical support would perform the search function.

**CURRENT STATUS:** What percent of work do CCSWs do?

We estimate a statewide average of about 65% of Establishing Tribal Contacts is done by CCSWs.

**COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS:** Workload reduction. Cost for additional staff.

**MEASUREMENT OF SUCCESS:** Number of inquiries to tribes and BIA. Number of youth with confirmed membership status. Average time to confirmation of membership status. Case review results. Feedback from Tribes in 7.01 meetings (difficult to measure). Note: this information may be difficult to obtain from FamLink and is not now available in CAMIS.

## **N. REPORTING MONTHLY STATISTICS**

**DESCRIPTION:** Compile hand counts of information of outcome measures, shared planning staffings, GAIN-SS (a mental health and substance abuse assessment), case counts, cases assigned and closed, productivity, and others.

**CURRENTLY PERFORMED BY:** Social Worker 3, Supervisors, clerical, and Area Administrators.

**CRITERIA:** Criteria were developed to help prioritize each task. A rating of 1 to 5 was given in three areas:

*Ease of implementation:* 1 = hard to implement; 5 = easy to implement

*Impact on Social Worker workload:* 1 = no reduction to workload; 5 = significant reduction

*Impact to Family/child:* 1 = negative impact; 5 = no or positive impact

If a task is moved from social workers workload, a total rating of 15 (5 for each criteria) means the task would make a significant positive impact; a total rating of 3 means it would not make much of an impact.

Total: 15

- Ease of implementation: 5
- Impact on Social Worker workload: 5
- Impact to Family/Child: 5

### **OPTIONS:**

#### **1. FamLink will eliminate most hand counts except for some Braam requirements.**

##### **Pros**

- a. FamLink will automate this information, eliminating hand counts and saving social worker time.

##### **Cons**

- a. It will take some time after FamLink goes live to build all the reports that were in CAMIS. Some hand counts may continue until the reports are available.

**PREFERRED OPTION:** Option 1 - FamLink - What cannot be automated in FamLink should be reviewed for future inclusion in FamLink.

**CURRENT STATUS:** What percent of work do CCSWs do?

We estimate a statewide average of about 30% of Reporting Monthly Statistics is done by CCSWs.

**COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS:** Reduce SW workload. No additional cost.

**MEASUREMENT OF SUCCESS:** Time saved by automating monthly statistics instead of doing hand counts, compiling and sending to HQ on a monthly basis.

## **O. REFERRAL FOR SERVICES**

**DESCRIPTION:** Social Workers identify service needs of clients and identify contracted providers to perform the services. They request approval for services and funding from the supervisor and send the referral for services to the provider. They send the approval to the Fiduciary Specialist who makes payment arrangements to the provider.

**CURRENTLY PERFORMED BY:** Social Worker 3

**CRITERIA:** Criteria were developed to help prioritize each task. A rating of 1 to 5 was given in three areas:

*Ease of implementation:* 1 = hard to implement; 5 = easy to implement

*Impact on Social Worker workload:* 1 = no reduction to workload; 5 = significant reduction

*Impact to Family/child:* 1 = negative impact; 5 = no or positive impact

If a task is moved from social workers workload, a total rating of 15 (5 for each criteria) means the task would make a significant positive impact; a total rating of 3 means it would not make much of an impact.

Total: 13

- Ease of implementation: 5
- Impact on Social Worker workload: 4
- Impact to Family/Child: 4

### **OPTIONS:**

#### **1. Put current contract providers on CA intranet so all Social Workers and Fiduciary Specialists can refer to this list.**

##### **Pros**

- a. Saves time of searching out providers
- b. Accessible to all staff
- c. Referrals completed faster

##### **Cons**

- a. Initial work and maintenance of putting all providers on intranet

#### **2. Use Fiduciary Specialists to send funding approval notice to provider and make payment arrangements.**

##### **Pros**

- a. Save social worker time
- b. Referrals completed faster

##### **Cons**

- a. None

**3. FamLink will automate this process in Release one.**

**Pros**

- a. Save social worker time
- b. Referrals completed faster

**Cons**

- a. None

**PREFERRED OPTION:** Option 1 and 2 until FamLink goes live, then Option 3

**CURRENT STATUS:** What percent of work do CCSWs do?

We estimate a statewide average of about 100% of Coordinating Referrals for Services is done by CCSWs.

**COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS:** Significant reduction to SW workload. No additional cost if can use existing resources to put contracts on intranet.

**MEASUREMENT OF SUCCESS:** Reduce SW workload. Reduced turn around time between the time the requests come in and when the payments are made.

## **P. ACCESS & COORDINATION OF STATE CARS & RELATED EQUIPMENT**

**DESCRIPTION:** State cars, infant or booster seats, cameras, audio recorders and related equipment must be gathered, placed in cars if applicable and checked out by case carrying social workers who need this equipment when traveling and to conduct investigations, family visits and related tasks away from the office. This equipment must also be put back in storage and checked in when the SW returns to the office

NOTE: For emergent calls, the need for equipment check-out is sometimes outside of normal business hours. All social workers must check out cars. CPS workers have kits that contain the related equipment; other social workers must sign it out when needed.

**CURRENTLY PERFORMED BY:** Social Worker 3, clerical support staff

**CRITERIA:** Criteria were developed to help prioritize each task. A rating of 1 to 5 was given in three areas:

*Ease of implementation:* 1 = hard to implement; 5 = easy to implement

*Impact on Social Worker workload:* 1 = no reduction to workload; 5 = significant reduction

*Impact to Family/child:* 1 = negative impact; 5 = no or positive impact

If a task is moved from social workers workload, a total rating of 15 (5 for each criteria) means the task would make a significant positive impact; a total rating of 3 means it would not make much of an impact.

Total: 13

- Ease of implementation: 5
- Impact on Social Worker workload: 3
- Impact to Family/Child: 5

### **OPTIONS:**

- 1. Assign Secretary Seniors to locate and check out cars and equipment when social workers' make a verbal request; Social worker can sign for the car and equipment on the way to the appointment.**

#### **Pros**

- a. Eliminates forms; can use single sign-out sheet
- b. Saves significant social worker time by not having to locate car and equipment at time of appointment or emergency
- c. Reduces loss or misplacement of equipment and keys

#### **Cons**

- a. Adding this task as well as others to administrative support duties may result in the need for additional staff
- b. Administrative support may be caught in the middle if social workers have conflicting needs for cars and equipment

**2. Set up locked storage area for keys and equipment and a simple automated system for social workers to sign out and in keys and equipment.**

**Pros**

- a. Eliminates forms; can use single sign-out sheet
- b. Saves significant social worker time by not having to locate car and equipment at time of appointment or emergency
- c. Reduces loss or misplacement of equipment and keys
- d. Requires no additional staff

**Cons**

- a. Not every office has space for locked storage area
- b. Harder to prioritize use of state resources than if check-out is done in person. Support staff will still have to monitor and re-prioritize use of equipment daily
- c. May require development of an automated system (e.g., Excel spreadsheet); if combined with locking mechanism on storage area, may require purchase of software

**PREFERRED OPTION:** Option 1 - Administrative support staff will check out cars and round up needed equipment when social workers make verbal request. Option 2 if the office has the capability to adopt - Set up locked storage area with a simple automated system for social workers to sign keys and equipment out and in (if space available).

**CURRENT STATUS:** What percent of work do CCSWs do?

We estimate a statewide average of about 55% of Access and Coordination of State Cars and Equipment is done by CCSWs.

**COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS:** Savings using less costly staff. Partially offset if there is any software cost or additional staff needed.

**MEASUREMENT OF SUCCESS:** Availability of resources to social workers within 15 minutes.

## **Q. WRITING PETITIONS**

**DESCRIPTION:** Preparing and writing two types of court petitions: Dependency petitions - occurs early in a case when court intervention is being requested based on either imminent risk or as a result of an investigation. Petition to terminate parental rights - occurs much later in the involvement of the court and department, and only in a portion of cases.

**CURRENTLY PERFORMED BY:** Social Worker 3 writes the Dependency petitions. SW 3 provides the AAG with an extensive written referral from which the AAG writes the Termination petitions.

**CRITERIA:** Criteria were developed to help prioritize each task. A rating of 1 to 5 was given in three areas:

*Ease of implementation:* 1 = hard to implement; 5 = easy to implement

*Impact on Social Worker workload:* 1 = no reduction to workload; 5 = significant reduction

*Impact to Family/child:* 1 = negative impact; 5 = no or positive impact

If a task is moved from social workers workload, a total rating of 15 (5 for each criteria) means the task would make a significant positive impact; a total rating of 3 means it would not make much of an impact.

Total: 11

- Ease of implementation: 3
- Impact on Social Worker workload: 3
- Impact to Family/Child: 5

### **OPTIONS:**

#### **1. Social Worker 3 continues to write Dependency petitions or extensive referral documents in order for the AAG to write the Termination petitions**

##### **Pros**

- a. Dependency - Helps social workers understand factors that support a successful case
- b. Termination - SW knows the case

##### **Cons**

- a. Time consuming
- b. Very technical skill set

#### **2. Assistant Attorney's General writes the petitions:**

##### **Pros**

- a. Dependency - Legally articulate - best legal presentation based on facts
- b. Termination - Lower volume of petitions - AAG already knows the case from dependency work and can write petition in collaboration with the social worker
- c. Social worker is no longer required to write an extensive referral
- d. Already in place in some offices

**Cons**

- a. Dependency - AAGs may not be staffed to perform this task.
- b. At time of dependency don't know facts, social worker has to write a draft or tell

**3. Hire legal secretaries in CA to write petitions**

**Pros:**

- a. Efficient, fast, formatted correctly, well written.

**Cons:**

- a. Social worker needs to provide all facts to secretary.
- b. Would need additional FTEs and funding to hire.

**PREFERRED OPTION:**

**Short term - Combination of Option 1 and 2**

SW 3 retains dependency petitions

AAGs write termination petitions without extensive written referrals from SW 3s. SWs will work collaboratively with the AAGs to determine when it is time to terminate parental rights. The AAGs will use the information in the legal record, attend shared planning (or other) meetings, work with the SW and use other means to write the termination petition. Social workers will no longer be required to write an extensive referral.

**Long term - Option 2 and 3**

Seek resources for AAGs to write dependency petitions.

Hire legal secretaries within CA to draft dependencies using information in documentation in FamLink.

**CURRENT STATUS: What percent of work do CCSWs do?**

We estimate a statewide average of about 85% of written referrals to the AAGs for Termination Petitions is done by CCSWs.

**COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS:**

**Short term:** SW 3s will retain dependency petitions and AAGs will write termination petitions without written referrals from SW 3. This is already in place in one region.

**Long term:** New FTEs would be needed in either the AGO or CA to shift writing dependency petitions from social workers.

**Option 2:** FTE cost will be the highest.

**Option 3:** This could be cost efficient as legal secretary 1 and 2 are lower cost than Social Worker 2 and 3.

**MEASUREMENT OF SUCCESS: Reduce SW workload.**

## **R. CARE OF CHILDREN IN OFFICES**

**DESCRIPTION:** Children are in need of supervision when they are in DCFS offices primarily because they have been removed from their homes and are waiting for a placement to be located. The assigned social worker is completing activities and paperwork necessary to obtain a placement, document the risk issues, reasons for the removal, and prepare the case for necessary services.

**CURRENTLY PERFORMED BY:** Social Worker 3, Home Support Specialists, work study case aides, interns, clerical, non-case carrying SW

**CRITERIA:** Criteria were developed to help prioritize each task. A rating of 1 to 5 was given in three areas:

*Ease of implementation:* 1 = hard to implement; 5 = easy to implement

*Impact on Social Worker workload:* 1 = no reduction to workload; 5 = significant reduction

*Impact to Family/child:* 1 = negative impact; 5 = no or positive impact

If a task is moved from social workers workload, a total rating of 15 (5 for each criteria) means the task would make a significant positive impact; a total rating of 3 means it would not make much of an impact.

Total: 9

- Ease of implementation: 3
- Impact on Social Worker workload: 3
- Impact to Family/Child: 3

(Note: This has a very high impact on SW workload, but occurs infrequently. When it does occur, it can take up a whole day.)

### **OPTIONS:**

#### **1. Contract for emergency child care for infant to 12 years**

##### **Pros**

- a. Provides licensed, child oriented care
- b. More friendly child care option

##### **Cons**

- a. Many providers do not offer drop in care
- b. It is costly to retain or hold slots

#### **2. Use Home Support Specialists (HSS), Social Work Program Specialists, Social Worker 1, work study case aides**

##### **Pros**

- a. CA staff person is in the office, available when necessary
- b. Staff are trained for the job
- c. Can have an assigned person of the day to ensure availability

##### **Cons**

- a. May need additional staff, depending on office

### 3. Develop a volunteer program

#### Pros

- a. Volunteers will want to do the job

#### Cons

- a. Use staff resources to recruit, train, and support volunteers
- b. Irregular hours and hard to plan for
- c. Volunteers have a variety of skill levels that may not match the need

**PREFERRED OPTION:** Option 2 - Use Home Support Specialists (HSS), Social Work Program Specialists, Social Worker 1, or work study case aides; and Option 1 - Contract for emergency child care for infant to 12 years.

#### **CURRENT STATUS:** What percent of work do CCSWs do?

We estimate a statewide average of about 50% of Care of Children in Offices is done by CCSWs.

**COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS:** Workload reduction for case carrying social workers. Additional resources needed for contracts for slots and retainer fees. May need additional FTEs if this can't be absorbed into current workload. HSS or SW 1 are experienced with our clients.

**MEASUREMENT OF SUCCESS:** Reduction in SW workload. Safer approach to child care needs because of increased level of supervision.

## **S. PARENTING PLAN/CUSTODY ISSUES**

**DESCRIPTION:** When children are placed with relatives or a parent who does not have legal custody, a parenting plan must be filed with the court. This gives the caregiver legal authority to protect the child. Parenting plans are completed by parents with help from the courts, paralegals, or attorneys. The social worker attempts to coordinate this, but there is a lack of resources to develop and file parenting plans with the court. This causes the case to remain open and continues workload for the social worker.

**CURRENTLY PERFORMED BY:** Case carrying social worker 3 coordinates this task. In some counties, family court has facilitators who can assist parents or kin to file these plans. In other counties, pro bono attorneys are available to assist.

**CRITERIA:** Criteria were developed to help prioritize each task. A rating of 1 to 5 was given in three areas:

*Ease of implementation:* 1 = hard to implement; 5 = easy to implement

*Impact on Social Worker workload:* 1 = no reduction to workload; 5 = significant reduction

*Impact to Family/child:* 1 = negative impact; 5 = no or positive impact

If a task is moved from social workers workload, a total rating of 15 (5 for each criteria) means the task would make a significant positive impact; a total rating of 3 means it would not make much of an impact.

Total: 9

- Ease of implementation: 1
- Impact on Social Worker workload: 3
- Impact to Family/Child: 5

### **OPTIONS:**

- These options are only for parenting plans where there is agreement from all parties who are available.
- Because these are agreed, an attorney may not be needed. It may be possible to use county personnel or paralegals supervised by an attorney.
- Reimbursement should include attorneys' fees, filing costs and publication costs.

### **1. Create contracts with local family courts to facilitate parenting plans and pay for court costs and publication expenses.**

#### **Pros**

- a. In large counties, these facilitators already exist and can assist our families
- b. Working with other governmental agencies is often easier than setting up a contract with a private entity
- c. Takes care of facilitation as well as court costs

#### **Cons**

- a. Facilitators are not available in all counties
- b. The facilitators who do exist sometimes are not able to provide the level of service that our clients need

**2. Work with local AAGs and public defenders to represent parents in filing parenting plans.**

**Pros**

- a. This allows non-custodial parents to use their own attorneys
- b. This option would be available in all areas of the state if a statewide agreement is reached

**Cons**

- a. Parents' attorneys are already stretched very thin
- b. Parents' attorneys often do not work in family court and may have a learning curve
- c. There is a lack of incentive for parents' attorneys to do this
- d. This option would not be available to kin seeking third party custody
- e. Need to develop a method to pay for filing fees and publication notices

**PREFERRED OPTION:** Option 1 - Create contracts with local family courts to facilitate parenting plans and pay for court costs and publication expenses.

**CURRENT STATUS:** What percent of work do CCSWs do?

We estimate that approximately 250 cases could be closed, currently on CCSW caseloads, if parenting plans were done in a timely manner. We are addressing this issue by working with our partners in the courts, Office of Public Defense, Prosecuting Attorneys, Attorney General's Office and private attorneys for short-term and long-term solutions.

**COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS:** Workload reduction. Cost to contract. Court facilitators exist in some counties but not in others. Would be additional cost to add more facilitators.

**MEASUREMENT OF SUCCESS:** Can be tracked in CAMIS and FamLink. Investigate doing a match in court data between dependencies and family court matters. May be a small increase in reunifications and decrease in time to reunification for children remaining with a formerly non-custodial parent. Dependencies are dismissed with children residing with non-custodial parents who are capable of protecting the child. When the custodial parent is absent or incarcerated more custody changes may be made if there is a process to accomplish the legal procedures needed. Positive ramifications for child support as well as child safety.

## **T. COMPILING PACKETS FOR SERVICES**

**DESCRIPTION:** Workers spend a great deal of time searching through files and service episode records to fill out the history on a child or family. The information from the record is put into packets that help determine where a child is placed and the services that a family might need or be eligible for. These packets are made for services such as Behavioral Rehabilitative Services (BRS), Children's Long-Term Inpatient Programs (CLIP), and Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC).

**CURRENTLY PERFORMED BY:** Case carrying social workers, case aides, interns, SW supervisors, college career graduates

**CRITERIA:** Criteria were developed to help prioritize each task. A rating of 1 to 5 was given in three areas:

*Ease of implementation:* 1 = hard to implement; 5 = easy to implement

*Impact on Social Worker workload:* 1 = no reduction to workload; 5 = significant reduction

*Impact to Family/child:* 1 = negative impact; 5 = no or positive impact

If a task is moved from social workers workload, a total rating of 15 (5 for each criteria) means the task would make a significant positive impact; a total rating of 3 means it would not make much of an impact.

Total: 12

- Ease of implementation: 4
- Impact on Social Worker workload: 3
- Impact to Family/Child: 5

### **OPTIONS:**

#### **1. Hire Social Worker 1s or College Interns to complete.**

##### **Pros**

- a. Lower cost than a Social Worker 3
- b. Completes the searching for all relevant documents and compiles into a packet which is the time consuming part of this task

##### **Cons**

- a. Increases the liability if documents are missed or incorrect documents are included
- b. Case Carrying Social Worker still needs to review packet information and sign off on the document
- c. May need more staff

#### **2. Contract out to private agency to complete and assess.**

##### **Pros**

- a. Relieves social worker of workload
- b. Consistent in putting together packets

**Cons**

- a. Cost of contracting out
- b. May increase liability if incorrect information is included
- c. Need access to FamLink or CA staff would have to print information for contractor

**PREFERRED OPTION:** Option 1 - Hire Social Worker 1s or college interns to complete.

**CURRENT STATUS:** What percent of work do CCSWs do?

We estimate a statewide average of about 98% of Developing Child Information Packets is done by CCSWs.

**COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS:** Lower cost if SW 1 does this job. Offset if need to hire additional staff. FamLink will help by being able to create and review content online and print packages more efficiently.

**MEASUREMENT OF SUCCESS:** Time consuming part of task is a workload reduction for Social Worker 3.

## U. RETURNING PHONE CALLS

**DESCRIPTION:** Following up with callers who leave insufficient information to determine their need; redirecting callers (e.g., foster parents) to appropriate resource or contact; providing basic information.

**CURRENTLY PERFORMED BY:** Case Carrying Social Worker

**CRITERIA:** Criteria were developed to help prioritize each task. A rating of 1 to 5 was given in three areas:

*Ease of implementation:* 1 = hard to implement; 5 = easy to implement

*Impact on Social Worker workload:* 1 = no reduction to workload; 5 = significant reduction

*Impact to Family/child:* 1 = negative impact; 5 = no or positive impact

If a task is moved from social workers workload, a total rating of 15 (5 for each criteria) means the task would make a significant positive impact; a total rating of 3 means it would not make much of an impact.

Total: 9

- Easy to implement: 4
- Impact to Social Worker: 2
- Impact to client/family: 3

### **OPTIONS:**

#### **1. Use SW 1s, college interns, Home Support Specialists and Customer Service Specialists to make follow-up calls.**

##### **Pros**

- a. Relationships will improve with clients and foster parents
- b. Calls are returned within time frames
- c. Some needs will be taken care of without SW 3 involvement
- d. Increased customer satisfaction
- e. Will provide SW 3 with all needed information available when s/he phones back, and will know the best time to phone back
- f. Provides learning opportunities for SW 1s and interns
- g. Follow-up phone call takes less time than when done by SW 3; customer is less likely to engage in conversation about other case issues
- h. Call by SW 3 should be more efficient

##### **Cons**

- a. SW 3 still will need to return phone calls
- b. May end up achieving only small time savings
- b. Could confuse some clients
- c. Can result in duplication of conversations

**PREFERRED OPTION:** Option 1 - Use SW 1s, college interns, Home Support Specialists, and Customer Service Specialists to make follow-up calls.

**CURRENT STATUS:** What percent of work do CCSWs do?

We estimate a statewide average of about 98% of Phone Calls are Returned by CCSWs.

**COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS:** To the extent callers' needs can be resolved by others, savings using less costly staff. If additional resources are needed, savings will be offset by salaries of additional staff.

**MEASUREMENT OF SUCCESS:** Customer satisfaction could be measured by survey.