

CHILDREN'S ADMINISTRATION
Child Protective Services



2016 SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET

Request	FY16	FY17	15-17
FTE		45.2	22.6
GF-State		\$4,506,000	\$4,506,000
Total		\$4,598,000	\$4,598,000

DECISION PACKAGE SUMMARY

The Children's Administration (CA) requests 22.6 FTEs and \$4,506,000 GF-State and \$4,598,000 Total Funds in the 2016 Supplemental Budget in order to respond to increased Child Protective Services (CPS) intakes that require 24 hour face-to-face responses. By funding this request, CA is expected to meet required response times and close investigations within 90 days as required by statute.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Screened-in allegations of abuse and neglect (intakes) requiring a 24 hour face-to-face visit with children increased 51 percent between 2012 and 2014. These intakes require an investigation rather than a Family Assessment Response (FAR) because allegations include serious physical abuse and injuries, sexual abuse, and serious neglect of children. The 24 hour face to face visit with children ensures that when serious allegations of child abuse and/or neglect are made, children are seen quickly to assess if the child is in imminent danger and immediate safety concerns are addressed. The 24 hour face-to-face visit includes direct observation of the child and the child's circumstances and interviews with children who have the capacity to communicate. This face to face visit provides caseworkers with valuable information needed to assess imminent danger to children and allows for protective actions and safety planning to take place. The policy requiring a 24 hour response time for these serious allegations was implemented in 2005 and resulted in a 25 percent decline in repeat abuse six months following the initial allegations due to quicker response times.

The current staffing levels are not sufficient to meet the increased volume of intakes and places vulnerable children at greater risk when they cannot be seen within 24 hours. The Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) recommends a caseload size of twelve intake reports per month per worker. In Washington State, the average caseload size for investigation caseworkers ranged from 16.4 to 19.3 intakes per month in calendar year 2015. The increased volume of intakes creates barriers to thorough and complete assessments and to closing CPS investigations within the 90 day timeframe required per statute.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

CA requests additional CPS investigation staff to respond timely to the increased intakes and to close investigations within 90 days as required by statute. Additional funding and FTEs will allow investigation caseworkers to ensure that when serious allegations of child abuse and/or neglect are made, children are seen within 24 hours to assess if the child is in imminent danger and address immediate safety concerns as well as close investigations within statutory timelines.



DSHS VISION

People are healthy • People are safe • People are supported • Taxpayer resources are guarded

DSHS MISSION

To transform lives

DSHS VALUES

Honesty and Integrity • Pursuit of Excellence • Open Communication • Diversity and Inclusion • Commitment to Service

EXPECTED RESULTS

The FTE and funding request will protect vulnerable children. This request will allow CA to meet the Child Welfare League of America's recommended caseload size of 12 intake reports per month, per worker and increase the number of children who are alleged to be victims of serious child abuse and/or neglect who are seen within 24 hours. The request will allow CA to decrease the number of investigations open beyond the statutory timelines.

STAKEHOLDER IMPACT

Child advocates statewide support efforts to protect children who are alleged to be abused and/or neglected through emergent 24 hour response.