



Child Protective Investigator and Child Protective Investigator Supervisor Educational Qualifications, Turnover, and Working Conditions Status Report

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Purpose

The information provided within this report is designed to meet requirements contained within section 402.402(3), Florida Statutes, which requires the Department of Children and Families (Department) to provide a status report to the Governor, President of the Senate and Speaker of the House of Representatives as to the educational qualifications, turnover, and working conditions of the Department's child protective investigators, child protective investigator supervisors and other child protective investigative staff.

This report includes recent information related to the Department's full time equivalent (FTE) child protective investigative positions within the areas of:

- Child protective investigative staff minimum qualifications, base pay and position descriptions;
- The distribution of child protective investigative positions across the six Department Regions and allocation of child protective investigative positions across the four child protective investigation class titles;
- The percentage of vacant child protective investigative positions;
- The monthly average number of new cases being assigned to all Child Protective Investigator and Senior Child Protective Investigator positions;
- The average number of Child Protective Investigators and Senior Child Protective Investigators supervised by a Child Protective Investigator Supervisor – SES staff;
- Turnover rate for all child protective investigative positions;
- General educational information for all child protective investigative positions;
- Employee satisfaction, opinion and concerns survey results; and
- Innovations in child welfare to support frontline staff.

Background

General Statutory Requirements

Chapter 39, Florida Statutes, establishes requirements that child protective investigators respond to and make determinations as to the overall validity of allegations of child maltreatment. Child protective investigators are required to respond to all reports accepted by the Florida Abuse Hotline within 24 hours. A significant subset, typically around 20%, are identified as needing an immediate response priority as defined by Chapter 65C-30, Florida Administrative Code. Per administrative code, "immediate" means as soon as possible, but not later than four hours. Child protective investigators assess the immediate and overall safety of children as well as the risk of future maltreatment. When a child is determined to be unsafe, child protective investigators initially consider the implementation of an in-home safety plan and the initiation of in-home services to protect the child and stabilize the family. In the most serious situations, child protective investigators remove the child from the home and place the child with another parent, relative, non-relative, or in licensed shelter care. In general, the statewide child removal rate fluctuates between 6-8 children removed per 100 alleged victims.

Department of Children and Families and Sheriff Office Investigations

The Department currently conducts child protective investigations in 61 of Florida's 67 counties. Sheriffs' Offices perform child protective investigations in the remaining six counties (Broward, Hillsborough, Manatee, Pasco, Pinellas, and Seminole) under grant agreements with the Department. Unless otherwise specified, all information contained within this report addresses Department child protective investigative positions only.

Child Protective Investigative Positions

Child Protective Investigative Staff – Minimum Qualifications, Base Pay and Position Descriptions

Current minimum qualifications for all child protective investigative positions require an applicant for employment to:

- Hold a current valid driver's license;
- Have a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university with a preference given to degrees in social work, behavioral science, nursing or education; and
- Obtain Florida Child Protection certification within 12 months of being hired.

In March 2017, the Department implemented a Child Protection Glide Path incentive program in an effort to increase recruitment and retention of critical staff positions. This Glide Path allows Child Protective Investigators to demonstrate specific skills and core competencies associated with their class title to achieve a Competency Based Increase in salary.

The Department has divided child protective investigative positions into five class titles with the Child Protective Investigator class title having three salary levels based on skills and core competencies achieved. These class titles and annual base salaries for each of the classes are:

- Child Protective Investigator:
 1. Original Appointment - \$35,640;
 2. First Competency Based Increase - \$37,620;
 3. Second Competency Based Increase - \$39,600;
- Senior Child Protective Investigator-\$41,500;
- Child Protective Investigator – Field Support Supervisor-\$46,900;
- Child Protective Investigator Supervisor – SES- \$49,200; and
- Critical Child Safety Practice Expert – \$55,000.

Table 1 provides a complete listing of the base pay, general job description and minimum qualifications for all five of the Department's Child Protective Investigative classes.

Table 1 – Child Protective Investigative Positions by Class, Title, Base Pay, Job Description and Minimum Qualifications

Class Title	Pay Grade	Base Pay	Job Description	Minimum Qualifications
Child Protective Investigator	019	\$35,640	This is professional work protecting children, working with families and conducting investigations of alleged abused, abandoned, neglected or exploited children, in the Department of Children and Families.	Original Appointment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current valid driver's license; • A bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university (preferred degree in social work, behavioral science, nursing or education field); • Must successfully complete a Child Protection Certification exam with 80% and attain provisional certification within 3 months of hire; and • Preference given to individuals successfully completing the Department's Child Protection Internship.
		\$37,620		1st Competency Based Increase <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be able to carry a full caseload without restrictions; demonstrate increased independence in achieving daily work duties within 9 months of hire.
		\$39,600		2nd Competency Based Increase <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must obtain full Florida Child Protective Investigator Certification status within 12 months of hire; • Successful completion of Career Service probationary status within 12 months of hire.
Senior Child Protective Investigator	020	\$41,500	Performs advanced (senior-level) child protective services work. Work involves investigating and analyzing child protective problems, taking corrective action for children, and overseeing and evaluating casework activities. May help plan, assign, and/or supervise the work of others. Works under minimal supervision, with extensive latitude for the use of initiative and independent judgment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current valid driver's license; • A bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university (preferred degree in social work, behavioral science, nursing or education field); • Two years of child protection related experience; and • Current Florida Child Protective Investigator certification.
Child Protective Investigator – Field Support Supervisor	021	\$46,900	Performs field-based supervision, coaching, mentoring of investigative staff, and primarily new, developing supervisory staff. However, they could be used to assist with staff that may need some additional coaching or development in certain areas. These positions schedule time with investigators, as well as perform random visits. They provide field support to the supervisor in developing a well-trained and prepared investigative staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current valid driver's license; • A bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university (preferred degree in social work, behavioral science, nursing or education field); • Two years of child protection related experience; • Circuit and regional travel required; and • Current Florida Child Protective Investigator certification.
Child Protective Investigator Supervisor - SES	421	\$49,200	This is an advanced-level professional supervisory position. Directs the work of child protective investigators and support staff. The primary duty of the position is to spend the majority of the time communicating with, motivating, training and evaluating employees, planning and directing their work; and having the authority to hire, transfer, suspend, layoff, recall, promote, discharge, assign, reward, or discipline subordinate employees to effectively recommend such actions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current valid driver's license; • A bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university (preferred degree in social work, behavioral science, nursing or education field); • Three years of child protection related experience; • One year of coordinating the work of CPIs or supervisory/managerial experience; and • Current Florida Child Protective Investigator certification.
Critical Child Safety Practice Expert	024	\$55,000	Performs advanced professional work assessing and developing Child Protective Investigators (CPIs) to ensure investigative activities align with Child Welfare Practice. Conducts reviews of complex cases such as young children exposed to parental substance abuse or domestic violence to identify safety threats and consult with investigators and supervisors to ensure the sufficiency of safety plans to protect children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful completion of the Level 1 and Level 2 Critical Child Safety Practice Proficiency*; • A bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university (preferred degree in social work,** behavioral science, nursing or education field); and • One-year experience as a Florida Child Welfare Professional**. <p>* State of Florida Position Description. ** 2016 CCSPE Proficiency Process Prerequisite</p>

Source: Florida Department of Children and Families, Office of Human Resources as of 9/28/2017

Child Protective Investigative Position Classification and Vacancies

People First, Florida's automated web-based Human Resource Information System, provides classification and vacancy data for all Child Protective Investigative positions. Table 2 shows there were 1,535 positions statewide within the child protective investigation job class as of July 31, 2017 with 109 FTEs (7.10%) being vacant. The statewide vacancy rates for each respective Class vary in range (3-9%) with the exception of the Child Protective Investigator Field Support Supervisor Class, which has a much lower rate at 3.8%. While this one-day snapshot (July 31, 2017) reflects similar vacancy rates between most classes, the annualized turnover rates discussed later in this report highlight much wider variances between positions over time.

Region	Class Title	Positions Allocation as of 7/31/2017	Total Vacant Positions as of 7/31/2017	Percentage of Positions Vacant as of 7/31/2017
Northwest	Child Protective Investigator	143	7	4.90%
	Senior Child Protective Investigator	26	2	7.69%
	Child Protective Investigator – Field Support Supervisor	4	0	0.00%
	Child Protective Investigator Supervisor - SES	31	1	3.23%
Total		204	10	5.00%
Northeast	Child Protective Investigator	247	23	9.31%
	Senior Child Protective Investigator	49	4	8.16%
	Child Protective Investigator – Field Support Supervisor	6	0	0.00%
	Child Protective Investigator Supervisor - SES	51	1	1.96%
Total		353	28	8.00%
Central	Child Protective Investigator	344	21	6.10%
	Senior Child Protective Investigator	73	6	8.22%
	Child Protective Investigator – Field Support Supervisor	8	1	12.50%
	Child Protective Investigator Supervisor - SES	73	2	2.74%
Total		498	26	5.22%
SunCoast	Child Protective Investigator	113	17	15.04%
	Senior Child Protective Investigator	18	4	22.22%
	Child Protective Investigator – Field Support Supervisor	2	0	0.00%
	Child Protective Investigator Supervisor - SES	22	5	22.73%
Total		155	26	17.00%
Southeast	Child Protective Investigator	114	2	1.75%
	Senior Child Protective Investigator	26	4	15.38%
	Child Protective Investigator – Field Support Supervisor	3	0	0.00%
	Child Protective Investigator Supervisor - SES	28	1	3.57%
Total		171	7	4.10%
Southern	Child Protective Investigator	103	4	3.88%
	Senior Child Protective Investigator	23	1	4.35%
	Child Protective Investigator – Field Support Supervisor	3	0	0.00
	Child Protective Investigator Supervisor - SES	25	3	12.00%
Total		154	8	5.20%

Region	Class Title	Positions Allocation as of 7/31/2017	Total Vacant Positions as of 7/31/2017	Percentage of Positions Vacant as of 7/31/2017
Statewide	Child Protective Investigator	1,064	74	6.95%
	Senior Child Protective Investigator	215	21	9.77%
	Child Protective Investigator – Field Support Supervisor	26	1	3.85%
	Child Protective Investigator Supervisor - SES	230	13	5.65%
Total		1,535	109	7.10%

Source: People First Data Warehouse as of August 1, 2017.

Average Child Protective Investigator Caseloads and the Average Supervisor to Child Protective Investigator Ratio

Child Protective Investigator Caseload

The issue of manageable caseloads is extremely important to the retention and overall job satisfaction of child protective investigative staff. Data from the 2017 Department of Children and Families Annual Child Protective Investigation Survey (Table 8, page 15) indicates that child protection staff identified “workload manageability” questions with ratings of “Disagree” or “Strongly Disagree” at a higher consistency than other questions. The workload questions explored the ability of child protective investigators to maintain a proper work/life balance. These aspects of the job – volume of work, work/life balance, and scheduling – underscore the importance of maintaining a manageable caseload to address both job satisfaction and retention rates for child protection staff.

The first element in determining the average caseload is a count of the total number of Florida Abuse Hotline Intakes assigned each month as an “Initial” or “Additional” investigation to Child Protective Investigators and Senior Child Protective Investigators. If no current investigation is underway, the Abuse Hotline creates an “Initial” investigation and forwards the information and allegations taken from the reporter to the appropriate local unit for assignment. The Abuse Hotline sends new information or allegations received on existing, open investigations to the local unit as “Additional” investigations. Additional Investigations contain either a new alleged child victim, perpetrator or maltreatment not contained in the Initial intake and are linked to the Initial investigation opened on the family. Additional investigations count in the investigative caseload because a new on-site visit to the home and additional child and subject interviews must be commenced either immediately or no later than 24 hours.

Region	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Northwest Region	15,088	16,638	16,842	16,644	16,745	17,998	19,178	19,413
Northeast Region	28,349	31,099	31,622	30,084	30,852	31,481	32,957	33,924
Central Region*	40,666	43,239	43,702	43,015	43,991	45,116	46,507	47,658
SunCoast Region*	11,855	13,387	13,345	13,055	13,589	13,650	14,286	15,367
Southeast Region*	14,330	15,807	15,606	15,373	15,835	15,786	15,908	16,719
Southern Region	11,847	14,163	13,931	13,499	13,983	13,841	13,844	14,474
Investigative Totals*	122,135	134,333	135,048	131,670	134,995	137,872	142,680	147,555

Source: Child Protective Investigation Trend Reports as of 10/05/2017.

A second significant source of workload, not factored into the above chart, involves the departmental response to Special Conditions Referrals accepted by the Abuse Hotline. Special Condition Referrals do not contain allegations of maltreatment (by an adult caregiver) but involve circumstances and situations that still require a response by the Department. Examples include parent(s) being unavailable because of hospitalization or incarceration (not involving child maltreatment), parent(s) requesting assistance to help manage “difficult” children, and Child-on-Child Sexual Abuse referrals in which the child and family’s therapeutic needs are assessed regarding behavior and trauma services.

Table 3 above, shows for SFY 2016-17 the Department conducted 147,555 child protective investigations (Sheriff Offices Investigations excluded).¹ Investigations (excluding Special Condition Referrals) have increased 3.4% over the past year and 17.3% dating back to SYF 2009-10. The Suncoast and Southeast Regions reported numbers appear disproportionately low (based on child population) because five of the six sheriff operations also conduct child protective investigations in these two Regions.

Although not specifically charted, Special Condition Referrals have increased even more significantly over a five- year trend. From 7,155 in SFY 2012-13 to 12,818 in SFY 2016-17, a 44.2% increase. Most of this increase is attributable to the statutory age requirements for Child-on-Child referrals being eliminated July 1, 2014. Previously, referrals were only accepted on children 12 and under. At present, no age restriction is in place and referrals may involve older teens all the way up to their 18th birthday.

Table 4 provides average monthly number of new investigations assigned to CPI and Senior CPI by Region for Department child abuse investigations based upon allocated and filled positions for SFY 2016-17. While several child protection professionals (e.g., Field Support Supervisors, Quality Assurance and/or Critical Child Safety Practice Experts and most directly, the respective Child Protective Investigator Supervisor) may consult on an investigation, Child Protective Investigators (CPI) and Senior Child Protective Investigators (Sr. CPI) conduct the actual investigation. Consequently, only the CPI and Sr. CPI position allocations are used to establish caseload numbers based on the number of new investigations assigned.

*Sheriff's Offices Excluded

¹ Source: Child Protective Investigation Trend Reports as of 10/05/2017

Current Child Protective Investigator Workload

Table 4 – Monthly Average Number of New Investigations Assigned to CPI and Sr. CPI Investigators SFY 2016-17.

	Region	Total Investigations (Initial and Additional)	Allocated CPI / Sr. CPI Investigators as of 8/1/17	Average Monthly New Cases Per Allocated Position	Filled CPI / Sr. CPI Positions as of 7/31/17	Average Monthly New Cases Per Actual Filled Positions
SFY 2016-17	Northwest	19,413	169	9.6	160	10.1
	Northeast	33,924	296	9.6	269	10.5
	Central	47,658	417	9.5	390	10.2
	SunCoast	15,367	131	9.8	110	11.6
	Southeast	16,719	140	10.0	134	10.4
	Southern	14,474	126	9.6	121	10.0
	Statewide	147,555	1,279	9.6	1,184	10.4

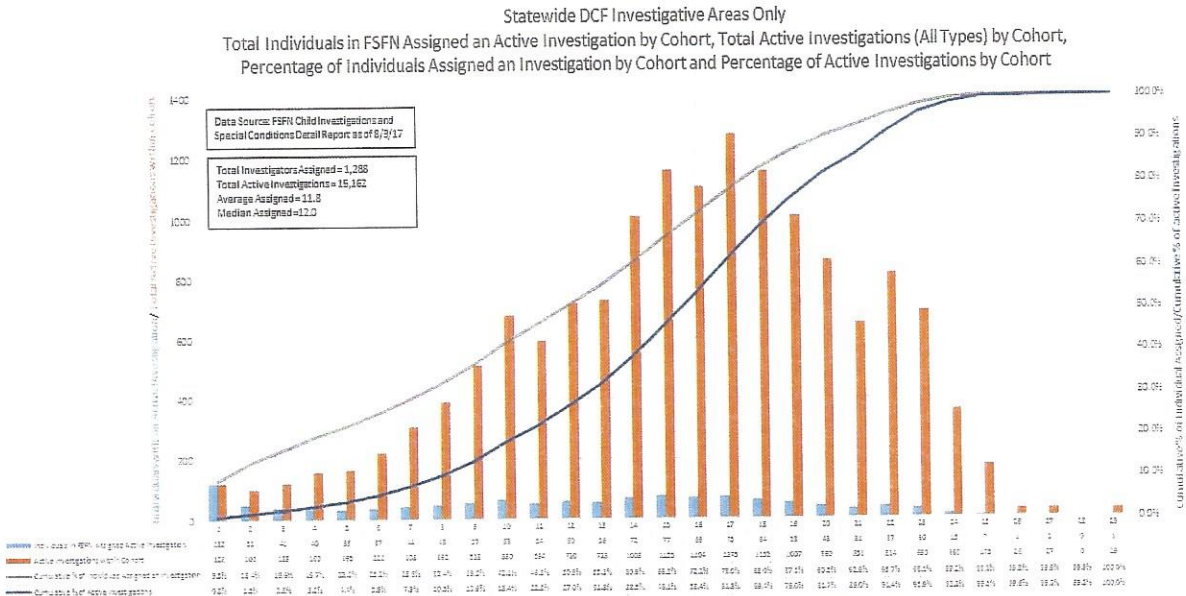
Source: Child Protective Investigation Trend Reports as of 10/05/2017 and People First Data Warehouse as of 7/31, 2017.

The monthly average of new investigations per allocated Child Protective Investigator and Senior Child Protective Investigator positions statewide was 9.6 for SYF 2016-17. Comparing this caseload size with the 12 new investigations recommended per investigator per month by the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) is misleading for three reasons. First, Florida's statewide average of 9.6 is based on allocated, not filled positions. For example, a field unit comprised of six allocated positions (but actually staffed at only five investigators) working 60 cases per month has an average new monthly workload of 10 (60/6). The actual caseload, however, is 12 per filled position during that month (60/5). Consequently, the last column in Table 4 shows the adjusted rates of work (10.4) based on filled, not allocated positions as of August 31, 2017. These filled positions do not account for the number of staff not receiving cases due to Workers' Compensation, Family and Medical Leave Act, or Sick and Annual Leave.

With average turnover rates ranging from 28 to 69% per Region for Child Protective Investigators (Table 6) from 7/1/2016 through 6/30/2017, the most overlooked aspect of caseload size is the number of filled positions in training status. These include new employees who are in training (no assigned cases) or provisionally certified investigators working protected (smaller) training caseloads. To expound on the previous example, a field unit of six allocated and filled investigator positions working 60 new cases per month with four experienced investigators, one provisionally credentialed investigator just out of training, and one investigator just starting Pre-Service training would appear to have a new average monthly caseload of 10.0 reports per filled position (60/6). More likely, however, the four experienced investigators would be assigned 14 reports, the provisionally credentialed investigator would be assigned four reports, and the new hire (but allocated position) would be assigned no reports for the month.

Finally, the Child Welfare League of America adds a cautionary third consideration which is not reflected in Table 4, and that is the concern that the targeted recommendation of 12 active cases should also be based upon workdays available during a designated 30-day period. Mandatory in-service trainings, use of sick and annual leave, and compensatory time off to adjust or control for overtime can considerably reduce available work-days over any 30-day period. When all three workload aspects are taken into consideration, the 9.6 statewide average for new cases per month for allocated Child Protective Investigator and Senior Child Protective Investigator positions does not accurately reflect the actual caseload conditions for these positions. This graph depicts active caseloads as of 8/3/2017:

Graph 1



Child Protective Investigator and Supervisor Staffing Ratios

Child Protective Investigator Supervisor positions are responsible for reviewing and approving all work conducted by Child Protective Investigator and Senior Child Protective Investigator positions. Field Support Supervisors augment the unit supervisor role by providing direct hands-on support to provisionally certified Child Protective Investigators until they are fully credentialed (typically a 12-month process). Field Support Supervisors also provide coaching and mentoring to established investigators working complex cases (e.g., child fatalities, domestic violence, human trafficking, etc.). The average number of Child Protective Investigator and Senior Child Protective Investigator positions per Child Protective Investigator Supervisor is calculated by dividing the total number of allocated Child Protective Investigator Supervisor positions by the total number of allocated Child Protective Investigator and Senior Child Protective Investigator positions. Table 5 provides a comparison of the average number of Child Protective Investigator and Senior Child Protective Investigator positions assigned to each Child Protective Investigator Supervisor, by Region. The current statewide staffing pattern is one supervisor per 5.6 investigators.

Table 5 – Distribution of Department Child Protective Investigation Positions per Supervisor by Region by State Fiscal Year

Region	Position Allocation SFY 2013-14			Position Allocation SFY 2014-15			Position Allocation SFY 2015-16			Position Allocation SFY 2016-17		
	Child Protective and Senior Child Protective Investigators	Child Protective Investigator Supervisor - SES	Average Staffing Ratio	Child Protective and Senior Child Protective Investigators	Child Protective Investigator Supervisor - SES	Average Staffing Ratio	Child Protective and Senior Child Protective Investigators	Child Protective Investigator Supervisor - SES	Average Staffing Ratio	Child Protective and Senior Child Protective Investigators	Child Protective Investigator Supervisor - SES	Average Staffing Ratio
Northwest	132	27	4.9	153	30	5.1	156	31	5.0	169	31	5.5
Northeast	250	43	5.8	294	50	5.9	292	51	5.7	296	51	5.8
Central	350	62	5.6	415	73	5.7	425	73	5.8	417	73	5.7
SunCoast	109	18	6.1	131	22	6.0	130	22	5.9	131	22	6.0
Southeast	127	24	5.3	152	28	5.4	148	28	5.3	140	28	5.0
Southern	115	21	5.5	138	25	5.5	129	25	5.2	116	25	4.6
Statewide	1,083	195	5.6	1,283	228	5.6	1,280	230	5.6	1,279	230	5.6

Source: Florida Department of Children and Families, HR-Public Reports, Position Funding Statewide 2015-06-01 as of 8/24/2015. State of Florida People First Data Warehouse as of July 26, 2016, and July 21, 2017.

Turnover

The turnover rates (Table 6) for all child protective investigation positions over the past three years have averaged 30%, 37%, and 34%, respectively. Turnover rates for Child Protective Investigator positions over the past three years have averaged 39%, 45%, and 41%. The statewide turnover rate for supervisors over this same time-period averaged 10%, 17% and 16%, respectively.

The problem of excessively high turnover rates represents both a cause and effect. High rates are both indicative of the day-to-day challenges and relentless stress confronting child protection professionals and result in additional stress for staff remaining on the job. Separations trigger significant workload increases for all remaining staff as on-going investigations are re-assigned and there is one less investigator in rotation to accept new cases. Inflated caseload numbers and working significant amounts of overtime to keep up eventually wears down even the most dedicated and committed veteran when nearly half the investigator positions turnover within a year.

The Child Protective Investigator position is an extremely complex, entry level role that requires critical thinking and real time problem solving skills. In March 2017, the Department implemented a glide path - competency based curriculum to develop Child Protective Investigators professionally. Acknowledging the Child Protective Investigator position is an entry level role, despite its complexities, the Department elected to focus efforts on incentivizing competency based development to increase retention.

The Department lost 573 Child Protective Investigative staff during FY 2016-17. Some were voluntary separations and some were involuntary terminations due to records falsification, acting inappropriately, etc. In the involuntary situations, turnover is a strength. When focusing on the voluntary separations only, there are many factors that contribute to the end result. Of

note, in some areas, the local economy serves as a driver. For instance, in the Suncoast Region recently, the Department lost 52 Child Protective Investigators, of which 48% (25 staff) were lost to the Community-Based Care Lead Agency when it opened several new units, providing signing bonuses to already certified staff.

While the Department acknowledges that most Child Protective Investigators will not remain employed as an investigator indefinitely, through its Glide Path Initiative and other efforts, the Department's goal is to increase the percentage of Child Protective Investigators that remain at least two years to 80%.

Overall, turnover has a direct effect on manageable caseloads for experienced investigative staff. When Child Protective Investigators leave their position, cases are often redistributed to veteran CPIs increasing those CPI average caseloads to as much as 16 to 24 active cases. (See Graph 1 on page 9 of this report.)

Region	Class Title	SYF 2014-15			SYF 2015-16			SYF 2016-17		
		FTE	Separated	Rate	FTE	Separated	Rate	FTE	Separated	Rate
Northwest	Investigator	126	38	30%	129	64	50%	143	63	44%
	Senior Investigator	27	8	30%	27	10	37%	26	9	35%
	Field Support Supv.	4	0	0%	4	0	0%	4	0	0%
	Supervisor	30	3	10%	31	3	10%	31	5	16%
	Total	187	49	26%	191	77	40%	201	77	38%
Northeast	Investigator	247	87	35%	243	103	42%	247	66	27%
	Senior Investigator	47	10	21%	49	17	35%	49	7	14%
	Field Support Supv.	7	0	0%	6	0	0%	6	0	0%
	Supervisor	51	2	4%	51	9	18%	51	5	10%
	Total	352	99	28%	349	129	37%	353	78	22%
Central	Investigator	343	157	46%	356	154	43%	344	159	46%
	Senior Investigator	72	14	19%	69	13	19%	73	12	16%
	Field Support Supv.	14	0	0%	8	0	0%	8	1	13%
	Supervisor	73	10	14%	73	7	10%	73	13	18%
	Total	502	181	36%	506	174	34%	498	185	37%
SunCoast	Investigator	110	52	47%	109	62	57%	113	70	62%
	Senior Investigator	21	1	5%	21	0	0%	18	7	39%
	Field Support Supv.	2	0	0%	2	0	0%	2	0	0%
	Supervisor	22	6	27%	22	7	32%	22	4	18%
	Total	155	59	38%	154	69	45%	155	81	52%
Southeast	Investigator	125.5	38	30%	122	51	42%	114	44	6%
	Senior Investigator	26	1	4%	26	13	50%	26	7	27%
	Field Support Supv.	4	0	0%	3	0	0%	3	0	0%
	Supervisor	28	1	4%	28	2	7%	28	1	4%
	Total	183.5	40	22%	179	66	37%	171	52	30%

Region	Class Title	SYF 2014-15			SYF 2015-16			SYF 2016-17		
		FTE	Separated	Rate	FTE	Separated	Rate	FTE	Separated	Rate
Southern	Investigator	115	39	34%	103	44	43%	103	37	36%
	Senior Investigator	23	3	13%	26	6	23%	23	6	26%
	Field Support Supv.	3	0	0%	3	0	0%	3	0	0%
	Supervisor	25	1	4%	25	10	40%	25	8	32%
	Total	166	43	26%	157	60	38%	154	51	33%
Statewide	Investigator	1066.5	411	39%	1062	478	45%	1,064	439	41%
	Senior Investigator	216	37	17%	218	59	27%	215	48	22%
	Field Support Supv.	34	0	0%	26	0	0%	26	1	4%
	Supervisor	229	23	10%	230	38	17%	230	36	16%
	Total	1,545.5	471	30%	1536	575	37%	1,535	524	34%

Source: Florida Department of Children and Families, HR-Public Reports, Position Funding Statewide SFY 2013-14, SFY 2014-15, SYF 2016-17 and State of Florida People First Data Warehouse as of June 30, 2017.

From a practical standpoint, longevity (i.e., time on the job) is the most important factor related to new investigators and provisionally certified investigators gaining expertise and proficiency. Improving workforce stability by reducing staff turnover rates continues to be imperative for the Department.

The Department has invested substantial effort in finding and hiring the most appropriate candidates for the job. In January 2015, the Department began using a standardized pre-employment behavioral assessment to identify those potential candidates having the highest probability of achieving success as a child protective investigator. More recently, the Office of Child Welfare worked collaboratively with Human Resources and statewide recruitment coordinators to refine both the Child Protective Investigator Hiring Questions and emphasize the minimum job qualifications for child protective investigator positions to include a preference for both social work degrees and successfully having completed a Department's Child Protective Investigations Internship.

Attracting more social work students and graduates to the field of child welfare has produced mixed results. While child protection staff having a baccalaureate social work degree has increased nearly 9% over the past year (196, up from 180), there has been a 1% decrease (48, down from 49) in child protection staff having a master's of social work degree. Please see Table 7 in the following section for a complete distribution of current educational backgrounds.

Educational Levels and Background of Child Protective Investigative Staff

Statutory Requirements

Section 402.402(1), Florida Statutes, directs the Department to recruit and hire persons qualified by their education and experience to perform social work functions. Preference should be given to individuals having a social work degree with a second level preference given to

individuals with a human service related degree with the goal of having 50 percent of its workforce having a social work degree by 2019.²

Educational Attainment of Employed Child Protective Investigative Staff

As of July 24, 2017, a People First data extract indicated there were 1,606 child protective investigative positions including OPS within the People First data system, of which 1,345 were identified as having a baccalaureate degree; 220 were identified as having a master's degree; four were identified as having a doctorate degree; and 37 were identified as educational data unavailable.

Of the 1,606 child protective investigative staff listed in the People First data set, 239 held a degree in social work (191 baccalaureates and 48 masters' degrees). The total percentage of active child protective investigative staff currently holding a degree in social work is 15%. The 239 total staff represents a net decrease of .41% from the previous year's mark of 240.

An additional 510 child protective investigative staff held a baccalaureate or master's degree in psychology, sociology, counseling, special education, education, human development, child development, family development, marriage and family therapy, or nursing (451 baccalaureate and 59 master's degrees) for a percentage of child protective investigative staff that hold a secondary preferred degree of 32%.

In sampling a body of work completed by investigative staff involving child fatality cases during 2016 and 2017, child protective investigator staff having a social work or human services related degree did not perform any better than child protective investigator staff having a non-human services related degree. While 15% of the investigative workforce currently hold a social work degree (bachelors or masters), 24% of the investigative staff involved in the case warranting either a Critical Incident Rapid Response Team (CIRRT) or mini Critical Incident Rapid Response Team had a social work degree. Of the investigative staff having a human service related degree, 32% contribute to the total population of investigative staff, while 72% of this same degree type comprise the CIRRT and mini CIRRT involved cases. Non-human services degrees' make-up 53% of the investigative workforce demographic, and are only 4% of the CIRRT involved workload.

² Section 402.402(1)(a)(b)&(c), Florida Statutes

Table 7– Distribution of all Department Child Protective Investigative Positions by Region and Degree Type and Percentage of Degree Type by Total Employed as of 7/24/2017

Degree Type	Northwest	Northeast	Central	SunCoast	Southeast	Southern	Statewide
Baccalaureate Degree Social Work	55 (26%)	23 (7%)	53 (9%)	12 (9%)	30 (17%)	18 (11%)	191 (12%)
Master's Degree Social Work	9 (4%)	10 (3%)	18 (3%)	0 (0%)	4 (2%)	7 (4%)	48 (3%)
Baccalaureate Degree Psychology, Sociology, Counseling, Special Education, Education, Human Development, Child Development, Family Development, Marriage and Family Therapy or Nursing	39 (19%)	125 (37%)	164 (3%)	41 (30%)	38 (21%)	44 (28%)	451 (28%)
Master's Degree Psychology, Sociology, Counseling, Special Education, Education, Human Development, Child Development, Family Development, Marriage and Family Therapy or Nursing	9 (4%)	17 (5%)	21 (4%)	4 (3%)	4 (2%)	4 (3%)	59 (4%)
Baccalaureate Degree Other	80 (38%)	134 (39%)	269 (46%)	67 (49%)	89 (50%)	64 (41%)	703 (44%)
Master's Degree Other	13 (6%)	26 (8%)	39 (7%)	9 (7%)	10 (6%)	15 (10%)	112 (7%)
Degree Data Unavailable	3 (1%)	4 (1%)	21 (4%)	3 (2%)	1 (.60%)	5 (3%)	37 (2%)
Baccalaureate Degree Total	174 (83%)	282 (83%)	486 (83%)	120 (88%)	157 (89%)	126 (80%)	1345 (84%)
Master's Degree Total	31 (15%)	54 (16%)	78 (13%)	13 (10%)	18 (10%)	26 (17%)	220 (14%)
Doctorate Degree Total	1 (0.5%)	1 (0.3%)	1 (0.2%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.6%)	0 (0.0%)	4 (0.2%)
Total Employed as of 7/24/2017*	209 (13%)	341 (21%)	586 (36%)	136 (8%)	177 (11%)	157 (10%)	1606 **

Source: State of Florida People First Data Warehouse as of July 24, 2017. * This number does not include vacant positions
 **Due to rounding of numbers, the total percentage will not always equal 100%

Department of Children and Families 2017 Annual Child Protective Investigation Survey Results

The Department emailed a link to its Annual Child Protective Investigation Survey to all Department Child Protective Investigators, Senior Child Protective Investigators, Child Protective Investigator Field Support Supervisors, Critical Child Safety Experts and Child Protective Investigator Supervisors requesting input about current working conditions. The survey included both numerical scaling and the opportunity for investigators to provide written feedback on which factors most directly impact morale and the overall work environment.

Participation was highly encouraged and considerable effort went into assuring respondents of their anonymity. The survey was available over a one-week period from August 15, 2017 – August 25, 2017. Survey questions included education and experience levels (time on the job by class position) as well as two scaling inventories related to job satisfaction.

The survey had a 32.6% participation or return rate (524 respondents) with a very even distribution related to time spent on the job. Of the 524 respondents, 37% had less than 1 year on the job, 20% had one to two years' experience, 14% had two to three years' experience, 11% had three to five years' experience, and 18% had five years' experience or more. Table 8 shows participant responses to questions related to employee perceptions of the current work place.

Table 8 – Child Protective Investigation Survey Results, Employee Perception of the Work Environment

Child Protective Investigation Survey Results: "For the following statements, please indicate how much you agree/disagree"						
Question #	Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total Responses
One	I feel like Senior Management (Program Administrator and above) understands the role of a Child Protective Investigator	24.4%	48.3%	17.2%	10.1%	516
Two	The training I received prepared me for the Child Protective Investigator role	11.0%	50.3%	28.0%	11.1%	189
Three	The training I received prepared me for the Child Protective Investigator Supervisor role	10.0%	38.0%	35.0%	17.0%	60
Four	The ongoing training I receive is adequate	14.0%	57.0%	24.0%	5.0%	521
Five	My immediate supervisor communicates job expectations and responsibilities clearly	44.0%	41.0%	10.0%	5.0%	520
Six	I feel like Senior Management (Program Administrator and above) "has my back"	19.0%	42.0%	26.0%	14.0%	518
Seven	My immediate supervisor provides me with timely feedback	39.0%	45.0%	12.3%	4.4%	522
Eight	My immediate supervisor provides me with fair and honest feedback	43.0%	45.0%	8.0%	4.0%	519
Nine	I have sufficient discretion to perform my job and make informed decisions	26.2%	55.3%	12.4%	6.1%	523
Ten	My supervisor appreciates my work	42.0%	46.3%	7.0%	5.2%	520
Eleven	My workload is manageable	9.2%	42.2%	26.1%	23.0%	521
Twelve	Senior Management appreciates my work	17.0%	51.0%	21.0%	12.0%	514
Thirteen	If I struggle with my workload I can ask for assistance	19.3%	46.1%	24.0%	11.1%	523
Fourteen	I have enough time for my personal life	5.4%	27.3%	33.3%	34.0%	520
Fifteen	During my weekends I have at least one day without work responsibilities	10.0%	34.0%	33.0%	23.0%	521
Fifteen	The Department offers career paths for Child Protective Investigators	13.0%	58.0%	22.1%	7.2%	517

Source: The Department of Children and Families 2017 Annual Child Protective Investigation Survey Results. Run Date 8/15/2017 - 8/25/2017. All numbers are rounded to the nearest tenth. Due to rounding some percentages may total more than 100%.

On a positive note, Table 8 indicates that Child Protective Investigator Supervisors are doing a good job directing and supporting their staff. The four highest combined "Strongly Agree/Agree" scores were for supervisors clearly communicating job expectations and responsibilities; providing timely, fair and honest feedback; and conveying the message that the investigator's work is appreciated (Questions 5, 7, 8 and 10). These same sentiments are highlighted in Table 9 as an important characteristic of the job as being "Extremely Important" to receive "Fair Treatment from Supervisors and Managers."

Unfortunately, there is also a strong consensus that the job can be overwhelming despite the positive efforts of supervisors to motivate staff, as indicated by the highest combined "Disagree/Strongly Disagree" scoring in the areas of "My workload is manageable," and "During my weekends I have at least one day without work responsibilities." (Questions 11 and 14).

The high-paced, all-consuming nature of the work is also highlighted in Table 9 with the two highest scored items most important to personal satisfaction being "Ability to Manage Work and Personal Life" and "Time Off with No Work Responsibilities." Both questions received an average score of 9 for Characteristics of Importance on the job.

These survey results reinforce the fact that controlling caseload numbers is essential to maintaining a healthy balance between work and one's personal life.

Table 9 – Child Protective Investigations Survey – Characteristics of Importance

Child Protective Investigations Survey Results:
 “On a scale from 1 to 10 (1 meaning ‘not important at all’ and 10 meaning ‘extremely important’), please indicate how important the following things are to you for your personal satisfaction”

Question #	Question	1 Not Important at All	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 Extremely Important	Total Responses	Average Response
One	Immediate Supervisor Feedback	3	0	2	12	40	40	66	78	60	221	522	8
Two	Fair Treatment from Supervisor and Managers	2	0	1	2	8	6	21	59	57	368	524	9
Three	Base Pay	2	2	3	3	18	26	40	67	70	293	524	9
Four	Overtime Pay	5	3	9	3	29	19	36	45	71	302	522	9
Five	Discretionary Performance Bonus	20	5	4	8	39	37	47	48	66	246	520	8
Six	Job-Related Training	2	1	0	0	22	20	44	73	81	276	519	9
Seven	Immediate Supervisor Recognition for Work	10	11	13	11	72	57	75	74	55	146	524	7
Eight	Senior Management Recognition for Work	17	12	15	17	68	61	66	66	65	136	523	7
Nine	Time Off with No Work Responsibilities	4	4	1	3	10	10	26	45	52	368	523	9
Ten	Temporary Relief from Caseload Rotation	9	3	1	6	19	24	50	45	55	310	522	9
Eleven	Availability of Support	1	0	0	1	18	18	50	68	77	289	522	9
Twelve	Ability to Manage Work and Personal Life	0	0	1	2	9	14	20	35	49	390	520	9
Thirteen	Career Advancement Opportunities	7	2	4	4	29	27	52	68	58	272	523	9

Source: The Department of Children and Families 2017 Annual Child Protective Investigation Survey Results. Run Date 8/15/2017 - 8/25/2017

Survey Comments

A significant number of Child Protective Investigators, Senior Child Protective Investigators and Child Protective Investigator Supervisors took advantage of the opportunity to voice their concerns as well as share information on what motivates them. At the end of the survey, many participants provided written comments expounding on what they felt the Department needed to know to improve the work environment in an effort to recruit and retain staff in this critical and important job class.

Innovations in Child Welfare

In October 2016, Secretary Mike Carroll commissioned the assembly of a statewide workgroup to focus on identifying both immediate and long-term recommendations to support the work of frontline staff, supervisors, and managers. The workgroup gathered information from child

welfare staff around the state by conducting region facilitated workgroups, various statewide surveys, and information from evaluations of regional supervisor summits conducted in June and July of 2016. One of the most critical methods used to assess workforce needs were local Secretary “Huddles” conducted with frontline staff in various regions. The workgroup identified policy challenges, opportunities for change and enhancements to Florida’s new Child Welfare Practice.

To ensure a wide cross section of participation, a statewide, anonymous survey to child protective investigative staff was also administered in November of 2016. Four key aspects emerged from this survey around how child investigative staff utilized their time. Most indicated the majority of their time was spent:

- writing Family Functioning Assessments;
- entering Florida Safe Families Network case documentation;
- interviewing individuals pertinent to the investigation; and
- participating in case consultations.

After careful analysis of the information obtained, the workgroup presented several recommendations, of which the following “immediate solutions” have been implemented:

1. Develop specific case criteria to support abbreviated documentation of the Family Functioning Assessment; a pilot was implemented on March 1, 2016.
2. Expand existing practice protocols and criteria to allow for more timely closure of Patently Unfounded reports and cases containing these specific elements:
 - a. Report must not contain any children under age 6, or any age child with a verifiable significant developmental, medical or behavioral disability;
 - b. All children must be determined to be safe (absence of Present or Impending Danger);
 - c. Family may only have two prior reports within the last 12 months; and
 - d. No household member may be a caregiver responsible for any type of verified maltreatment at any time in the past.
3. Develop and deliver a series of practice related refresher trainings to child protective investigative staff in the following areas:
 - a. Family Functioning Assessments (FFA)
 - i. Quality components of an FFA
 - ii. Relevant and sufficient information; when enough is enough
 - b. Focus of Household; and
 - c. Conditions for Return.
4. Reinforce the Region’s ability to enforce the False Reporting Policy through written communication that deferred false reporters from inappropriate use of the Florida Abuse Hotline.
5. Refine and streamline the policy and practice related to:
 - a. Family Made Arrangements; and
 - b. One Parent Removals.

6. Revise operating procedure to collapse the number of required consultations previously included in DCF CFOP 170-5, Child Protective Investigations, and local protocols to enhance contact time spent with families.
7. In collaboration with Casey Family Programs, complete the benchmark study of the Florida Abuse Hotline acceptance criteria and assessment process to intervention responses as compared to other states.

On the Horizon

Managing 15 or more investigations in various stages of completion can be extremely difficult for even the most seasoned Department veteran. To address that ongoing challenge, the Department has closely followed the initial success of Children's Home Society of Florida's (CHS) case management pilot, Case AIM, to support case managers' work with families. The Department is implementing a 'CPI Support Pilot' that uses elements of the CHS model tailored to support investigative practices and better manage Child Protective Investigator workload. Highly qualified program support staff dedicated at the unit level will help coordinate and structure investigative activities including, but not limited to ensuring:

- Timely documentation of essential casework activities;
- Comprehensive synthesis and understanding of assessment information;
- Facilitation (scheduling and structuring) of necessary follow-up activities (e.g., Child Protection Team consults, taking parents to a psychological evaluation, supervising parent-child visits, etc.); and
- Facilitation of timely closures (i.e., prioritizing completion of "missing" activities – submission of referral, completion of risk assessment, entering chronological notes in FSFN, etc.).

A second effort on the horizon to support Child Protective Investigators is the use of predictive analytics to focus on repeat reporting and repeat maltreatments to identify Florida's most vulnerable children. The 'Chronicity Model' pilot will attempt to improve Child Protective Investigator efficiencies by integrating information from multiple sources into a single view so that investigators can use available time toward effective decision making rather than information gathering. The goal of the project is to present investigators with a comprehensive view of the child's surrounding environment prior to, or as close to commencement of the investigation as possible. This up-front synthesis of information will allow for the early identification of caregivers with the most serious history of child maltreatment and the agency's past intervention efforts (e.g., prior child removals, case management services, etc.).

Conclusion

The Department's charge of meeting the desired outcomes and statutory requirements associated with the recruitment and retention of child protective investigation staff remains a challenge. Developing and retaining a qualified and highly proficient workforce will remain the Department's top priority while continuing to evaluate and prioritize ways to strengthen outcomes for Florida's Families. In addition, the Department will continue to look at innovative ways, such as the Glide Path and CPI Efficiencies, to reduce turnover rates in the field of child protection.

NOTICE OF FILING

Reporting Agency:	Department of Children and Families
Recipient Agency:	GOVERNOR, SENATE PRESIDENT, HOUSE SPEAKER, MINORITY LEADERS
Subject:	Child Protective Investigator and Child Protective Investigator Supervisor Educational Qualifications, Turnover, and Working Conditions Status Report
Report Due Date:	October 1, 2017
Statutory Requirement:	s. 402.402(3), F.S.
Abstract:	<p>The Department conducts child protective investigations and makes determinations as to the validity of allegations of child abuse, abandonment or neglect. In performance of these duties child protective investigators are required to assess the overall safety and well-being of children, initiate the removal of children (if needed) and assist in the linking of families to appropriate in-home services that are designed to help stabilize the family and improve the overall safety and well-being of the children. The Department currently conducts child protective investigations in 61 of Florida's 67 counties. Sheriff's Offices perform child protective investigations in the remaining six counties (Broward, Hillsborough, Manatee, Pasco, Pinellas, and Seminole) under grant agreements with the Department.</p> <p>This report provides information on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Child protective investigative minimum qualifications, base pay and position descriptions;• The distribution of child protective investigative position across the six Department Regions and allocation of child protective investigative positions across the four child protective investigation class titles;• The percentage of vacant child protective investigative positions;• The monthly average number of new cases being assigned to all Child Protective Investigator and Senior Child Protective Investigator positions;• The average number of Child Protective Investigators and Senior Child Protective Investigators supervised by Child Protective Investigator Supervisor – SES staff;• Turnover rate for all child protective investigative positions;• General educational information for all child protective investigative positions; and• Employee satisfaction, opinion and concerns survey results. <p>Copies of this report may be obtained by contacting:</p> <p>Dept. of Children and Families Office of Child Welfare 1317 Winewood Blvd. Tallahassee, FL 32399-0700 Attn: JoShonda Guerrier, 850-717-4382 email: Joshonda.Guerrier@myflfamilies.com</p>