



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

ANNUAL REPORT

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Office of Child Welfare

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Purpose

This report meets 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 Investigator Supervisor, Child Protective Investigators, 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:

- 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 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;
- The 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.

Background

General Statutory Requirements

Chapter 39, Florida Statutes, outlines child protective investigator responsibilities for all child-related reports accepted by the Florida Abuse Hotline. First, investigators are directed to determine “whether there is any indication that any child in the family or household has been abused, abandoned, or neglected” and, if so, to identify the individual responsible for the maltreatment. Second, investigators are required to conduct and complete a family functioning assessment to identify the source of all danger threats in the home and assess the protective capacity of the caregivers for the child. Third, when a child has been maltreated, child protective investigators must 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 severe situations, child protective investigators remove the child from the home and place the child with another parent, relative, non-relative, or in licensed substitute care.

Department of Children and Families and Sheriff Office Investigations

Child protective investigations are conducted by the department in 60 of Florida's 67 counties. Sheriff's offices perform child protective investigations in the remaining seven counties (Broward, Hillsborough, Manatee, Pasco, Pinellas, Seminole, and Walton) under grant agreements with the department. The information within this report addresses positions for department child protective investigative staff. While retention data from the sheriff's offices is not a requirement of the grant, collaborative information sharing indicates that the sheriff's offices are similarly challenged by high turnover for their Child Protective Investigator (CPI) positions. Hence, the challenging nature of the work responsibilities transcends the individual entities responsible for child protection across the state.

Child Protective Investigative Positions

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

In March 2017, the department implemented a Child Protection Glide Path incentive program to increase recruitment and retention of critical staff positions. The Glide Path allowed CPIs to demonstrate specific skills and core competencies associated with their class title to achieve a Competency-Based Increase in salary.

The Child Protection Glide Path divided child protective investigative positions into five class titles with the CPI class title having three salary levels based on skills and core competencies achieved. The 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.

In June of 2019, the department discontinued the Child Protection Glide Path for a new Career Path initiative. Although still in development, the new Career Path will be designed to increase employee satisfaction and retention. It's expected to improve employee motivation, responsiveness, and productivity.

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 1 shows there were 1,634 positions statewide within the child protective investigation job class on June 24, 2019, with 105 FTEs (6 percent) being vacant. While this one-day snapshot reflects similar vacancy rates between most classes, the annualized turnover rates discussed later in this report highlight much wider variances between positions over time.

Table 1 – Classification and Vacancies of the Department Child Protective Investigative Positions as of 6/24/2019				
Region	Class Title	Position Allocation as of 6/24/2019	Total Vacant Positions as of 6/24/2019	Percentage of Positions Vacant as of 6/24/2019
Northwest	Child Protective Investigator	125	8	6.40%
	Senior Child Protective Investigator	43	2	4.65%
	Child Protective Investigator – Field Support Supervisor	4	0	0.00%
	Child Protective Investigator Supervisor - SES	35	1	2.86%
Total		207	11	5.31%
Northeast	Child Protective Investigator	251	30	11.95%
	Senior Child Protective Investigator	49	6	12.24%
	Child Protective Investigator – Field Support Supervisor	15	1	6.67%
	Child Protective Investigator Supervisor - SES	61	4	6.56%
Total		376	41	10.9%

Table 1 – Classification and Vacancies of the Department Child Protective Investigative Positions as of 6/24/2019				
Region	Class Title	Position Allocation as of 6/24/2019	Total Vacant Positions as of 6/24/2019	Percentage of Positions Vacant as of 6/24/2019
Central	Child Protective Investigator	349	10	2.87%
	Senior Child Protective Investigator	82	0	0.00%
	Child Protective Investigator – Field Support Supervisor	26	1	3.85%
	Child Protective Investigator Supervisor - SES	83	5	6.02%
Total		540	16	2.96%
SunCoast	Child Protective Investigator	115	13	11.30%
	Senior Child Protective Investigator	22	1	4.55%
	Child Protective Investigator – Field Support Supervisor	4	0	0.00%
	Child Protective Investigator Supervisor - SES	25	4	16.00%
Total		166	18	10.84%
Southeast	Child Protective Investigator	125	1	.80%
	Senior Child Protective Investigator	26	3	11.54%
	Child Protective Investigator – Field Support Supervisor	3	1	33.33%
	Child Protective Investigator Supervisor - SES	31	0	0.00%
Total		185	5	2.70%
Southern	Child Protective Investigator	97	9	9.28%
	Senior Child Protective Investigator	26	5	19.23%
	Child Protective Investigator – Field Support Supervisor	9	0	0.00%
	Child Protective Investigator Supervisor - SES	28	0	0.00%
Total		160	14	8.75%
Statewide	Child Protective Investigator	1062	71	6.69%
	Senior Child Protective Investigator	248	17	6.85%
	Child Protective Investigator – Field Support Supervisor	61	3	4.92%
	Child Protective Investigator Supervisor - SES	263	14	5.32%
Total		1634	105	6.43%

Source: People First Data Warehouse Vacancy Report as of June 24, 2019. This report reflects the number of vacant positions within a region on the day it is ran.

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

Child Protective Investigator Caseload

Manageable caseloads are fundamental to the retention and overall job satisfaction of child protective investigative staff. Data from the 2019 Department of Children and Families Annual Child Protective Investigation Survey (Table 7, page 13) 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 (Hotline) intakes assigned each month as an “Initial” or “Additional” investigation to CPs and Senior Child Protective Investigators (Sr. CPs). If no current investigation is underway, the Hotline creates an initial investigation and forwards the information and allegations taken from the reporter to the appropriate local unit for assignment. The 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 reported 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 within 24 hours.

Table 2 below, shows in SFY 2018-19 the department conducted 136,205 child protective investigations (sheriff’s offices investigations excluded).¹ The trend in investigations conducted (excluding Special Condition Referrals and Institutional Investigations) for the past 12 months reflect that the numbers for SFY 2018-19 show a slight decrease in intakes accepted by the Hotline compared to the prior two years. The Suncoast and Southeast Regions reporting numbers appear disproportionately low (based on child population) because five of the seven sheriff’s offices also conduct child protective investigations in these two regions. A decrease in investigations for the Northwest Region is due to the Walton County Sheriff’s Office joining Florida’s child protection services this fiscal year.

Region	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19*
Northwest Region	16,842	16,644	16,745	17,998	19,178	19,413	19,068	17,460
Northeast Region	31,622	30,084	30,852	31,481	32,957	33,924	32,135	31,222
Central Region*	43,702	43,015	43,991	45,116	46,507	47,658	46,981	45,527
SunCoast Region*	13,345	13,055	13,589	13,650	14,286	15,367	14,311	14,016
Southeast Region*	15,606	15,373	15,835	15,786	15,908	16,719	15,797	15,349
Southern Region	13,931	13,499	13,983	13,841	13,844	14,474	13,478	12,631
Investigative Totals*	135,048	131,670	134,995	137,872	142,680	147,555	141,770	136,205

Source: Child Protective Investigation Trend Reports as of September 11, 2018 for 2011 to SFY 2018. Child Welfare Dashboard for SFY 2018-19.

A second significant source of workload, not factored into the above chart, involves the departmental response to Special Conditions Referrals and Institutional Reports accepted by the Hotline. Special Conditions 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 caregiver being unavailable due to a number of circumstances, parent(s) requesting assistance to minimize or eliminate future abuse, neglect, or abandonment, and Child-on-Child Sexual Abuse referrals in which the child and family’s therapeutic needs are assessed regarding behavior and trauma services.

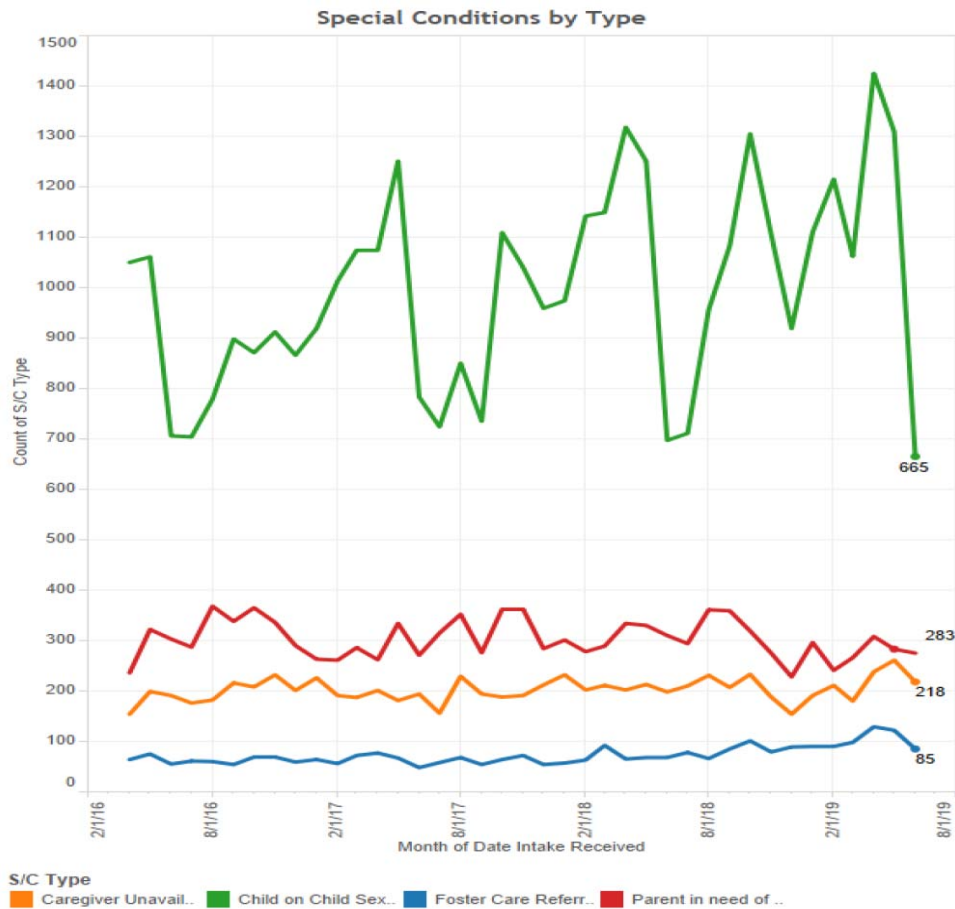
Graph 1 on the next page from the Child Welfare Key Indicators Monthly Report from July 2019, illustrates the increase in Special Condition Referrals by Type over a four-year time period.

¹ Source: Child Protective Investigation Trend Reports as of 9/11/2018

Most of this increase can be attributed to the statutory age requirements for Child-on-Child referrals being eliminated July 1, 2014. Formerly, referrals were only accepted on children age 12 and under. At present, no age restriction is in place and referrals may involve teens up to their 18th birthday.

*Sheriff's Offices Excluded

[Graph 1](#)



An institutional investigation involves alleged abuse by an “Other Persons Responsible for a Child’s Welfare” as defined in section 39.01 (54), Florida Statutes, which typically occur in institutional settings such as schools, daycares, foster care, residential group care, or facilities. A CPI is not responsible for completing a Family Functioning Assessment (FFA) in institutional investigations because the alleged maltreatment does not involve the child’s parent(s) or legal guardian. Institutional intakes represent another 3 percent (300 to 800) of the reports accepted for investigative response each month as illustrated in Graph 2.

[Graph 2](#)

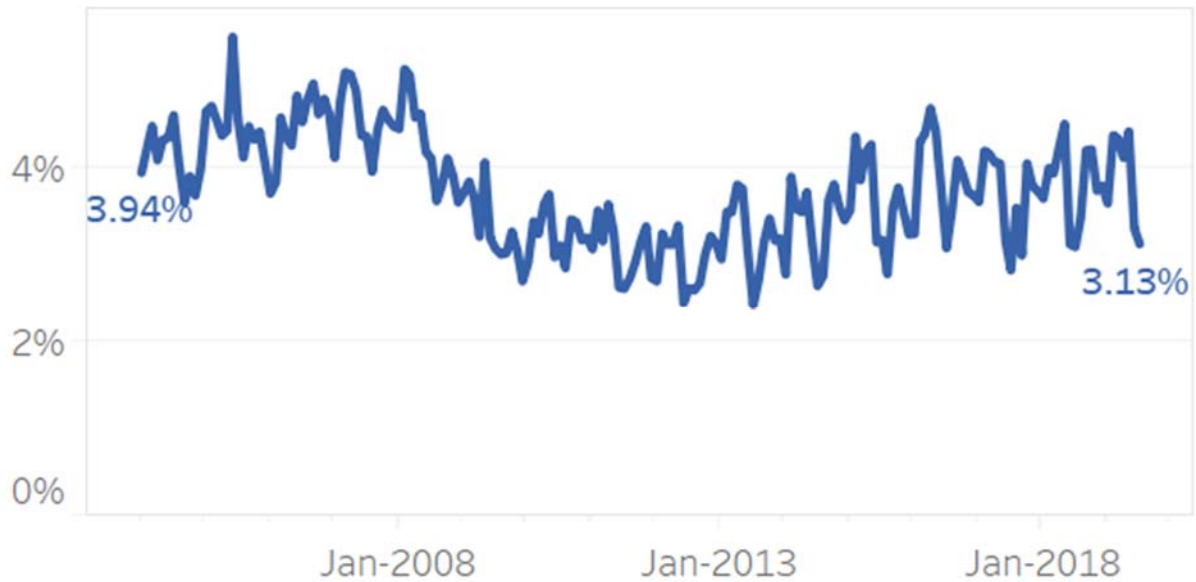


Table 3 provides the average monthly number of new investigations assigned to CPIs and Sr. CPIs by region for department child abuse investigations based upon allocated and filled positions for SFY 2018-19. While several child protection professionals (e.g., Field Support Supervisors, Quality Assurance and/or Critical Child Safety Practice Experts and, most directly, the respective CPI Supervisor) may consult on an investigation, CPIs and Sr. CPIs 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.

Current Child Protective Investigator Workload

Table 3 – Average Monthly Number of New Investigations Assigned to CPI and Sr. CPI Investigators SFY 2018-19.

	Region	Total Investigations (Initial and Additional)	Allocated CPI / Sr. CPI Investigators as of 6/24/19	Average Monthly New Cases Per Allocated Position	Filled CPI / Sr. CPI Positions as of 6/24/19	Average Monthly New Cases Per Actual Filled Positions
SFY 2018-19	Northwest	17,460	168	9	158	9
	Northeast	31,222	300	9	264	10
	Central	45,527	431	9	421	9
	SunCoast	14,016	137	9	123	9
	Southeast	15,349	151	8	147	9
	Southern	12,631	123	9	109	10
	Statewide	136,205	1310	9	1222	9

Source: Child Protective Investigation Trend Reports as of September 11, 2018, and People First Data Warehouse Vacancy Report as of June 24, 2019.

The monthly average of new investigations per allocated CPI and Sr. CPI positions statewide was nine for SYF 2018-19. It is important to note that Florida’s statewide average of nine is based on allocated, not filled positions. For example, a field unit comprised of six allocated positions (but staffed at only five investigators) working 60 cases per month has an average new monthly workload of ten (60/6). The actual caseload, however, is 12 per filled position during that month (60/5). Consequently, the last column in Table 3 shows the adjusted rates of work (nine) based on filled, not allocated, positions as of June 24, 2019.

Second, with average turnover rates ranged from 42 to 75 percent per region for CPIs (Table 5) from July 1, 2018 through June 24, 2019, an often-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 (capped at a reduced number) 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 certified investigator just out of training, and one investigator just starting Pre-Service training would appear to have a new average monthly caseload of ten reports per filled position (60/6). More likely, however, the four experienced investigators would be assigned 14 reports, the provisionally certified investigator would be assigned four reports, and the new hire (but allocated position) would have no assigned reports for the month.

Finally, the Child Welfare League of America, which recommends 12 new investigations per investigator per month, adds that the targeted recommendation of 12 active cases should also be based upon workdays available during a designated 30-day period. Mandatory in-service training, use of sick and annual leave, and compensatory time off to adjust or control for overtime can reduce available work-days over any 30-day period. When all three workload aspects are taken into consideration, the statewide average of nine new cases per month for allocated CPI and Sr. CPI positions does not accurately reflect the actual caseload conditions for these positions.

Child Protective Investigator and Supervisor Staffing Ratios

CPI Supervisor positions are responsible for reviewing and approving all work conducted by CPIs and Sr. CPIs. Field Support Supervisors augment the unit supervisor role by providing direct, hands-on support to provisionally certified CPIs until they are fully credentialed (typically a 12-month process). Field Support Supervisors also offer coaching and mentoring to established investigators working complex cases (e.g., child fatalities, domestic violence, human

trafficking). The average number of CPI and Sr. CPI positions per CPI Supervisor is calculated by dividing the total number of allocated CPI Supervisor positions by the total number of allocated CPI and Sr. CPI positions. Table 4 provides a comparison of the average number of CPI and Sr. CPI positions assigned to each CPI Supervisor by region. The current statewide staffing pattern is one supervisor per 5.0 investigators.

Table 4 – Distribution of Department Child Protective Investigation Positions per Supervisor by Region by State Fiscal Year

Region	Position Allocation SFY 2015-16			Position Allocation SFY 2016-17			Position Allocation SFY 2017-18			Position Allocation SFY 2018-19		
	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	156	31	5	169	31	5.5	167	32	5.2	168	35	4.8
Northeast	292	51	5.7	296	51	5.8	296	51	5.8	300	61	4.9
Central	425	73	5.8	417	73	5.7	416	73	5.7	431	83	5.2
SunCoast	130	22	5.9	131	22	6	131	22	6	137	25	5.5
Southeast	148	28	5.3	140	28	5	140	28	5	151	31	4.9
Southern	129	25	5.2	116	25	4.6	125	25	5	123	28	4.4
Statewide	1280	230	5.6	1269	230	5.5	1275	231	5.5	1310	263	5.0

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, July 21, 2017, June 30, 2018 and June 24, 2019.

Turnover

The CPI role is an incredibly complex, challenging position which requires critical thinking and real-time problem-solving skills. These types of demands can be difficult for a young workforce. Most child welfare professionals experience situations for the very first time while performing the day-to-day challenges and stress of the position.

The turnover rates (Table 5) for all child protective investigation positions over the past two years have averaged 37.78, and 37.30 percent, respectively. Turnover rates for only the CPI positions over the past two years have averaged, 47.90, and 48.10 percent, respectively. The statewide turnover rate for supervisors over this same time-period averaged, 12.27 and 13.11 percent, respectively.

Region	Class Title	SYF 2017-18			SYF 2018-19		
		Ave # Emp	Separated	Rate	Ave # Emp	Separated	Rate
Northwest	Investigator	134	70	52.24%	127.5	54	42.35%
	Senior Investigator	28	3	6.25%	36	11	30.56%
	Field Support Supervisor	4	0	0%	4	1	25.00%
	Supervisor	32	2	10.71%	33.5	5	14.93%
	Total	198	75	37.88%	201	71	35.32%
Northeast	Investigator	236	104	44.07%	232.5	110	47.31%
	Senior Investigator	45.5	6	13.19%	45	8	17.78%
	Field Support Supervisor	6	0	0.00%	10	1	10.00%
	Supervisor	50	4	8.00%	54	10	18.52%
	Total	337.5	114	33.78%	341.5	129	37.77%
Central	Investigator	339.5	143	42.12%	345.5	147	42.55%
	Senior Investigator	64	12	18.75%	72.5	10	13.79%
	Field Support Supervisor	8	0	0.00%	17	2	11.76%
	Supervisor	69.5	11	15.83%	73.5	9	12.24%
	Total	481	166	34.51%	508.5	168	33.04%
SunCoast	Investigator	110	83	75.45%	112	78	69.64%
	Senior Investigator	15.5	2	12.90%	19.5	2	10.24%
	Field Support Supervisor	1.5	1	66.67%	2.5	0	0.00%
	Supervisor	19	3	15.79%	20.5	0	0.00%
	Total	146	89	60.96%	154.5	80	51.78%
Southeast	Investigator	116.5	49	42.06%	128.5	67	52.14%
	Senior Investigator	25	8	32.00%	23.5	4	17.02%
	Field Support Supervisor	3	0	0.00%	3	0	0.00%
	Supervisor	27	2	7.41%	29.5	4	13.56%
	Total	171.5	59	34.40%	184.5	75	40.65%
Southern	Investigator	89	42	47.19%	91.5	43	46.99%
	Senior Investigator	20	5	25.00%	20	2	10.00%
	Field Support Supervisor	3.5	0	0.00%	6.5	1	15.38%
	Supervisor	22.5	5	22.22%	25.5	3	11.76%
	Total	135	52	38.52%	143.5	49	34.15%
Statewide	Investigator	1025	491	47.90%	1037.5	499	48.10%
	Senior Investigator	198	36	18.18%	216.5	37	17.09%
	Field Support Supervisor	26	1	3.85%	43	5	11.63%
	Supervisor	220	27	12.27%	236.5	31	13.11%
	Total	1469	555	37.78%	1533.5	572	37.30%

Source: Florida Department of Children and Families, HR Dashboard, Critical Class Turnover Summary by Location FY 17-18 and FY 18-19.

Note: The data source for Table 5 changed from last year; the FY 2017-18 data has been updated using the new data source. The FY 2016-17 data was not available via this data source at the time this report was created. The Average Number of Employees (Ave # Emp) is calculated using the number of employees at the beginning of the period plus the number of employees at the end of the period, the sum of which is divided by two.

Overall, turnover has a direct effect on manageable caseloads for experienced investigative staff. When CPIs leave their position, cases are often redistributed to veteran CPIs increasing their average caseloads to as much as 16 to 24 active cases. The high turnover rates impact the department's ability to develop a highly skilled, specialized workforce that is ready for career advancement opportunities.

Improving workforce stability by reducing staff turnover rates continues to be imperative for the department. From a practical standpoint, the most important retention factor for new and provisionally-certified investigators is to ensure that their job experience is commensurate with their workload as it increases.

Educational Levels and Background of Child Protective Investigative Staff

Statutory Requirements

Section 402.402(1), Florida Statutes, tasks the department to recruit and hire persons qualified by their education and experience to perform social work functions. Preference is 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 June 30, 2019, a People First data extract indicated there were 1,663 child protective investigative positions, including Other Personnel Services (OPS), of which 1,448 were identified as having a baccalaureate degree; 202 were identified as having a master's degree; three were identified as having a doctorate degree; and six were identified as educational data unavailable.

Of the 1,663 child protective investigative staff listed in the People First data set, 224 held a degree in social work (186 baccalaureates and 38 masters degrees). The total active child protective investigative staff currently holding a degree in social work is 13 percent. The 224 total staff represent a decrease of 7 percent from the previous year's number of 240. Child protection staff having a baccalaureate degree in social work has decreased this year, down 7 percent over the past year (199, down to 186). There has been a 7 percent decrease (41, down from 48) in child protection staff having a master's degree in social work. Table 6 provides a complete distribution of current educational backgrounds.

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

Degree Type	Northwest	Northeast	Central	SunCoast	Southeast	Southern	Statewide
Baccalaureate Degree Social Work	45 (22%)	34 (9%)	52 (9%)	11 (7%)	28 (13%)	16 (10%)	186 (11%)
Master's Degree in Social Work	5 (2%)	9 (2%)	13 (2%)	3 (2%)	3 (1%)	5 (3%)	38 (2%)
Baccalaureate Degree in Psychology, Sociology, Counseling, Special Education, Education, Human Development, Child Development, Family Development, Marriage and Family Therapy or Nursing	34 (16%)	98 (27%)	152 (27%)	54 (40%)	37 (18%)	42 (27%)	417 (25%)
Master's Degree in Psychology, Sociology, Counseling, Special Education, Education, Human Development, Child Development, Family Development, Marriage and Family Therapy or Nursing	9 (4%)	14 (4%)	14 (2%)	2 (1%)	3 (1%)	4 (3%)	48 (3%)
Baccalaureate Degree Other	95 (45%)	176 (48%)	297 (53%)	82 (52%)	122 (58%)	73 (46%)	845 (51%)
Master's Degree Other	19 (9%)	32 (9%)	31 (6%)	4 (3%)	14 (7%)	18 (11%)	118 (7%)
Degree Data Unavailable	2 (.9%)	2 (.5%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (.6%)	1 (.4%)	0 (0.0%)	6 (.3%)
Baccalaureate Degree Total	174 (83%)	308 (84%)	501 (89%)	147 (92%)	187 (89%)	131 (83%)	1448 (87%)
Master's Degree Total	33 (16%)	55 (15%)	58 (10%)	9 (6%)	20 (10%)	27 (17%)	202 (12%)
Doctorate Degree Total	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (.1%)	2 (1%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (.1%)
Total CPI Degree by Region as of 6/24/2019*	209 (13%)	366 (22%)	562 (34%)	159 (10%)	209 (13%)	158 (10%)	1663 **

Source: State of Florida People First Data Warehouse as of June 24, 2019. * This number does not include vacant positions. OPS positions are included in this total.
 **Due to rounding of numbers, the total of the percentages may not equal 100%

2019 Annual Child Protective Investigation Survey Results

The department emailed a link to its Annual Child Protective Investigation Survey to a total of 1,661 department CPIs, Sr. CPIs, CPI Field Support Supervisors, Critical Child Safety Experts, and CPI Supervisors to request 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 open from July 23, 2019 to August 6, 2019. Survey questions included education and experience levels (time on the job by class position) as well as two scaling inventories related to job satisfaction. Participants were not required to answer any of the questions within the survey to encourage participation and allow a respondent who was reluctant about his or her anonymity the opportunity to still have a voice.

The survey had a 39 percent participation or return rate (641 respondents) with a very even distribution related to time spent on the job. Of the 641 respondents, 36 percent responded they had less than one year on the job, 36 percent had one to two years' experience, 16 percent had two to four years' experience, and 12 percent had five or more years' experience. Table 7 shows participant responses to questions related to employee perceptions of the current workplace.

Table 7 – 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	NA	Total Responses
One	I feel like Senior Management (Program Administrator and above) understands the role of a Child Protective Investigator	18.1%	48.5%	22.6%	10.6%		639
Two*	The training I received prepared me for the Child Protective Investigator role	12.1%	55.3%	26.8%	5.6%		511
Three*	The training I received prepared me for the Child Protective Investigator Supervisor role	10.2%	38.5%	34.6%	9.4%	7%	127
Four	The ongoing training, I receive is adequate	13.5%	62.5%	19.3%	4.5%		635
Five	My immediate supervisor communicates job expectations and responsibilities clearly	44.0%	41.9%	10.5%	3.4%		634
Six	I feel like Senior Management (Program Administrator and above) "has my back."	15.7%	49.2%	22.3%	12.6%		635
Seven	My immediate supervisor provides me with timely feedback	40.6%	42.7%	12.3%	4.2%		634
Eight	My immediate supervisor provides me with fair and honest feedback	44.5%	42.4%	9.7%	3.2%		638
Nine	I have sufficient discretion to perform my job and make informed decisions	30.0%	56.1%	9.5%	4.2%		636
Ten	My supervisor appreciates my work	43.5%	41.9%	10.7%	3.7%		634
Eleven	My workload is manageable	8.6%	48.4%	29.5%	13.3%		636
Twelve	Senior Management appreciates my work	15.2%	51.8%	24.2%	8.7%		631
Thirteen	If I struggle with my workload, I can ask for assistance	16.8%	49.9%	26.5%	6.7%		637
Fourteen	I have enough time for my personal life	5.1%	31.6%	31.4%	31.7%		636
Fifteen	During my weekends I have at least one day without work responsibilities	8.7%	42.9%	31.8%	16.4%		638
Sixteen	The department offers career paths for Child Protective Investigators	15.6%	56.4%	19.9%	7.9%		632

Source: The Department of Children and Families 2019 Annual Child Protective Investigation Survey Results. Run Date 7/23/2019 - 8/6/2019. All numbers are rounded to the nearest tenth. Due to rounding of numbers, the total of the percentages may not equal 100%.
*Note: Questions two and three had a logic error in the survey tool. No data was collected from respondents for those two items.

Consistent with last year's results, Table 7 indicates that CPI 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 8 as an important characteristic of the job as being "Extremely Important" to receive "Fair Treatment from Supervisors and Managers."

It was consistently reported 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 "I have enough time for my personal life," and "During my weekends I have at least one day without work responsibilities" (Questions 14 and 15).

Several key factors identified as the most important to personal satisfaction scored higher this year than in past surveys include "Fair Treatment from Supervisor and Manager," "Pay Incentives (Base Pay and Overtime)," and "Temporary Relief from Caseload Rotation."

Consistent with last year’s survey results, the “Ability to Manage Work and Personal Life” and “Time Off with No Work Responsibilities,” also received some of the highest ratings for on-the-job “Characteristics of Importance.”

A significant number of CPIs, Sr. CPIs, and CPI 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 to recruit and retain staff in this critical and essential job class.

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

Table 8 – 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 ten 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	5	1	0	16	49	32	75	105	74	272	629	8
Two	Fair Treatment from Supervisor and Managers	0	1	0	5	9	9	23	62	62	466	637	9
Three	Base Pay	2	2	0	4	12	12	43	51	56	453	635	9
Four	Overtime Pay	9	2	0	7	26	20	40	58	52	419	633	9
Five	Discretionary Performance Bonus	11	5	0	9	32	32	51	63	57	366	626	9
Six	Job-Related Training	2	0	0	4	21	21	55	70	89	369	631	9
Seven	Immediate Supervisor Recognition for Work	10	10	0	14	71	63	90	97	74	182	611	8
Eight	Senior Management Recognition for Work	15	11	0	19	81	68	80	90	69	179	612	7
Nine	Time Off with No Work Responsibilities	0	3	0	2	9	19	14	37	76	471	631	9
Ten	Temporary Relief from Caseload Rotation	2	2	0	4	24	24	30	70	78	392	626	9
Eleven	Availability of Support	2	0	0	0	14	21	34	96	100	366	633	9
Twelve	Ability to Manage Work and Personal Life	1	0	0	1	7	6	17	31	64	502	629	10
Thirteen	Career Advancement Opportunities	6	3	0	5	19	20	50	54	68	402	627	9

Source: The Department of Children and Families 2018 Annual Child Protective Investigation Survey Results. Run Date 7/23/2019 - 8/6/2019

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. The development of new initiatives to support child protective investigative staff in their work will remain one of the department's top priorities. Florida's families deserve the most competent, experienced, and highly dedicated child protection staff. These staff are the most valuable asset and best hope for keeping vulnerable children safe and achieving the best possible outcomes.