



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

ANNUAL REPORT

Department of Children and Families

Office of Child Welfare

October 1, 2016

Mike Carroll

Secretary

Rick Scott

Governor

Contents

Purpose	2
Background.....	2
General Statutory Requirements	2
Department of Children and Families and Sheriff Office Investigations.....	2
Child Protective Investigator Positions	3
Child Protective Investigator Minimum Qualifications, Base Pay and Position Descriptions....	3
Child Protective Investigative Position Classification and Vacancies.....	4
Average Child Protective Investigator Caseloads and the Average Supervisor to Child Protective Investigator Ratio	6
Child Protective Investigator Caseload	6
Current Child Protective Investigator Workload	7
Child Protective Investigator and Supervisor Staffing Ratios	8
Turnover.....	9
Educational Levels and Background of Child Protective Investigative Staff.....	11
Statutory Requirements.....	11
Educational Attainment of Employed Child Protective Investigative Staff.....	11
Department 2016 Annual Child Protective Investigation Survey Results	12
Conclusion.....	15

Purpose

The information provided within this report is designed to meet requirements contained within section 402.402(3), Florida Statutes (F.S.), which requires the Department of Children and Families (Department) to provide a status report to the Governor and Legislature as to the educational qualifications, turnover rates, and working conditions for 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 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; and
- Employee satisfaction, opinion and concerns survey results.

Background

General Statutory Requirements

Chapter 39, F.S. 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 which is defined by Chapter 65C-30, Florida Administrative Code as soon as possible but no later than four (4) 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 and out-of-control 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 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 Investigator Positions

Child Protective Investigator 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 completed 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
- Must obtain Florida Child Protection certification within twelve months of being hired.

The Department has divided child protective investigative positions into five class titles. These class titles and annual base salary for each of the classes are:

- Child Protective Investigator – \$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 four of the Department's Child Protective Investigative classes.

Class Title	Pay Grade	Base Pay	Job Description	Minimum Qualifications
Child Protective Investigator	019	\$39,600	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	<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 obtain Florida Child Protective Investigator certification within 12 months of hire • Preference given to individuals successfully completing the Department's Child Protection Internship
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; and • 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; • 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 • 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 CPs 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) • 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				

Child Protective Investigation Position Classification and Vacancies

People First, Florida's automated web-based Human Resource Information System, provided classification and vacancy data for all Child Protective Investigative positions. Table 2 shows there were 1,536 positions statewide within the child protective investigation job class as of August 11, 2016 with 105 FTE (6.84%) being vacant. The vacancy rates for each respective Class are very uniform (6.97-9.63%) with the exception of the Child Protective Investigator Supervisor Class which has a much lower rate at 3.91%. While this one-day snapshot (August 11, 2016) reflects similar vacancy rates between most classes, the annualized turnover rates discussed later in the report highlight much wider variances between positions over time.

Table 2 – Classification and Vacancies of the Department Child Protective Investigative Positions as of 8/11/2016				
Region	Class Title	Positions Allocation as of 8/11/2016	Total Vacant Positions as of 8/11/2016	Percentage of Positions Vacant as of 8/11/2016
Northwest	Child Protective Investigator	129	7	5.43%
	Senior Child Protective Investigator	27	2	7.41%
	Child Protective Investigator – Field Support Supervisor	4	0	0.00%
	Child Protective Investigator Supervisor - SES	31	2	6.45%
Total		191	11	5.76%
Northeast	Child Protective Investigator	243	18	7.41%
	Senior Child Protective Investigator	49	6	12.24%
	Child Protective Investigator – Field Support Supervisor	6	0	0.00%
	Child Protective Investigator Supervisor - SES	51	0	0.00%
Total		349	24	6.88%
Central	Child Protective Investigator	356	26	7.30%
	Senior Child Protective Investigator	69	5	7.25%
	Child Protective Investigator – Field Support Supervisor	8	1	12.50%
	Child Protective Investigator Supervisor - SES	73	0	0.00%
Central Total		506	32	6.32%
SunCoast	Child Protective Investigator	109	8	7.34%
	Senior Child Protective Investigator	21	3	14.29%
	Child Protective Investigator – Field Support Supervisor	2	0	0.00%
	Child Protective Investigator Supervisor - SES	22	4	18.18%
SunCoast Total		154	15	9.74%
Southeast	Child Protective Investigator	122	10	8.20%
	Senior Child Protective Investigator	26	1	3.85%
	Child Protective Investigator – Field Support Supervisor	3	0	0.00%
	Child Protective Investigator Supervisor - SES	28	0	0.00%
Southeast Total		179	11	6.15%
Southern	Child Protective Investigator	103	5	4.85%
	Senior Child Protective Investigator	26	4	15.38%
	Child Protective Investigator – Field Support Supervisor	3	0	0.00%
	Child Protective Investigator Supervisor - SES	25	3	12.00%
Southern Total		157	12	7.64%
Statewide	Child Protective Investigator	1,062	74	6.97%
	Senior Child Protective Investigator	218	21	9.63%
	Child Protective Investigator – Field Support Supervisor	26	1	7.69%
	Child Protective Investigator Supervisor - SES	230	9	3.91%
Statewide Total		1,536	105	6.84%
Source: People First Data Warehouse as of August 11, 2016.				

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 2016 Department of Children and Families Annual Child Protective Investigation Survey (Table 8, page 13) indicates that the two most problematic ratings of “Dissatisfied” or “Completely Dissatisfied” were most frequently used by child protection staff in responding to the ‘Volume of Work’ survey question.

Similarly, the inability for child protective investigators to maintain a proper work/life balance and the difficulty in keeping a workable schedule were the second and third most problematic scored items on the survey (i.e., next highest use of Dissatisfied or Completely Dissatisfied responses). The close connection between these three aspects of the job – volume of work, work/life balance, and scheduling – clearly underscores 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 just like for Initial investigations.

Table 3 – Four Year Trend in Child Protective Investigations by Region				
	SFY 2012-13	SFY 2013-14	SFY 2014-15	SFY 2015-16
Agency	Initial and Additional Investigations	Initial and Additional Investigations	Initial and Additional Investigations	Initial and Additional Investigations
Northwest Region	18,329	18,533	20,251	21,388
Northeast Region	32,228	33,418	34,649	36,209
Central Region*	46,312	47,499	49,616	51,219
SunCoast Region*	14,172	14,724	15,205	15,696
Southeast Region*	16,913	17,437	17,866	17,797
Southern Region	14,681	15,203	15,383	15,212
Investigative Totals*	142,635	146,814	152,790	157,521

Source: Florida Safe Families Network Data Repository as of 7/15/2016.

For SFY 2015-16 the Department conducted 157,521 child protective investigations (Sheriff Offices Intakes excluded).¹

Table 3 above, shows a four-year trend by Region for Department conducted child abuse investigations. Reports have increased by 10.4% over the past four years (from SFY 2012-13 to SFY 2015-16). The Suncoast and Southeast Region report numbers appear disproportionately low (based on child population) because five of the six sheriff operations also conduct child protective investigation in these two Regions.

Table 4 provides average monthly caseload sizes by Region for Department child abuse investigations based upon allocated and filled positions for SFY 2015-16. While several child protection professionals (e.g., Field Support Supervisors, QA and/or Critical Child Safety Practice Experts and most directly, the respective Child Protective Supervisor) may consult on an investigation, child protective investigators and senior child protective investigators conduct the actual investigation. Consequently, only the Child Protective Investigator (CPI) and Senior Child Protective Investigator (Sr. CPI) position allocations are used to establish caseload numbers.

Table 4 – Monthly Average Number of New Investigations Assigned to CPI and Sr. CPI Investigators SFY 2015-16.

	Region	Total Investigations (Initial and Additional)	Allocated CPI / Sr. CPI Investigators as of 8/11/16	Average Monthly New Cases Per Allocated Position	Filled CPI / Sr. CPI Positions as of 8/11/16	Average Monthly New Cases Per Actual Filled Positions
SFY 2015-16	Northwest	21,388	156	11.43	147	12.12
	Northeast	36,209	292	10.33	268	11.26
	Central	51,219	425	10.04	394	10.83
	SunCoast	15,696	130	10.06	119	10.99
	Southeast	17,797	148	10.02	137	10.83
	Southern	15,212	129	9.83	120	10.56
	Statewide	157,521	1,280	10.26	1,185	11.08

Source: Florida Safe Families Network Data Repository as of 7/15/2016 and State of Florida People First Data Warehouse as of July 26, 2016.

Current Child Protective Investigator Workload

The monthly average of new investigations per allocated Child Protective Investigator and Senior Child Protective Investigator positions statewide was 10.26 for SYF 2015-16. 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 10.26 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 the 60 cases per month has an average new monthly workload of 10.0 (60/6). The actual caseload however, is 12.0 per filled position during that month (60/5). Consequently, the last Column in Table 4 shows the adjusted rates of work (11.08) based on filled, not allocated positions as of August 11, 2016.

*Sheriff’s Offices Excluded

¹ Source: Florida Safe Families Network Data Repository as of 7/15/2016.

With turnover rates averaging from 41.80 to 56.88% per Region for Child Protective Investigators (Table 6) from 7/1/2015 through 6/30/2016, a second overlooked aspect of caseload size is the number of filled positions in training status. These include new employees that have just started 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 investigators 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 per filled position (60/6). More likely however, the four experienced investigators would be assigned nearly a double workload (17 reports), the provisionally credentialed investigator nine (9) reports, and the new hire (but allocated position) not having any cases 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 10.26 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.

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 fully credentialed (typically a twelve-month process). Field Support Supervisors will also provide coaching and mentoring to established investigators working complex cases (e.g., child fatalities, domestic violence, and human trafficking, etc.). The average number of child protective investigators 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 Investigators 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		
	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
Northeast	250	43	5.8	294	50	5.9	292	51	5.7
Central	350	62	5.6	415	73	5.7	425	73	5.8
SunCoast	109	18	6.1	131	22	6.0	130	22	5.9
Southeast	127	24	5.3	152	28	5.4	148	28	5.3
Southern	115	21	5.5	138	25	5.5	129	25	5.2
Statewide	1,083	195	5.6	1,283	228	5.6	1,280	230	5.6

Source: Florida Department of Children and Families, HR-Public Reports, Position Funding Statewide 2014-06-02, as of 6/1/2014, 2015-06-01 as of 8/24/2015, and State of Florida People First Data Warehouse as of July 26, 2016.

Turnover

The turnover rates (Table 6) for all child protection positions over the past three years have averaged 32, 30, and 37 percent, respectively. However, when turnover rates for Child Protective Investigator positions are looked at singularly a more problematic picture emerges. The statewide turnover rate for supervisors over this same time-period (SFY's 2013-14, 2014-15 and 2015-16) averaged a moderate 15, 10 and 17 percent, respectively. Separation rates for Child Protective Investigator positions however, were nearly triple those of supervisors with the three past years at 39, 39 and 45 percent, 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.

Region	Class Title	SYF 2013-14			SYF 2014-15			SYF 2015-16		
		FTE	Separated	Rate	FTE	Separated	Rate	FTE	Separated	Rate
Northwest	Investigator	110	38	35%	126	38	30%	129	64	50%
	Senior Investigator	22	3	14%	27	8	30%	27	10	37%
	Field Support Supv.	3	0	0%	4	0	0%	4	0	0%
	Supervisor	27	3	11%	30	3	10%	31	3	10%
	Total	162	44	27%	187	49	26%	191	77	40%
Northeast	Investigator	207	76	37%	247	87	35%	243	103	42%
	Senior Investigator	43	4	9%	47	10	21%	49	17	35%
	Field Support Supv.	5	0	0%	7	0	0%	6	0	0%
	Supervisor	43	3	7%	51	2	4%	51	9	18%
	Total	298	83	28%	352	99	28%	349	129	37%
Central	Investigator	289	107	37%	343	157	46%	356	154	43%
	Senior Investigator	61	13	21%	72	14	19%	69	13	19%
	Field Support Supv.	5	1	20%	14	0	0%	8	0	0%
	Supervisor	62	13	21%	73	10	14%	73	7	10%
	Total	417	134	32%	502	181	36%	506	174	34%
SunCoast	Investigator	90	45	50%	110	52	47%	109	62	57%
	Senior Investigator	19	4	21%	21	1	5%	21	0	0%
	Field Support Supv.	2	0	0%	2	0	0%	2	0	0%
	Supervisor	18	3	17%	22	6	27%	22	7	32%
	Total	129	52	40%	155	59	38%	154	69	45%
Southeast	Investigator	104	30	29%	125.5	38	46%	122	51	42%
	Senior Investigator	23	2	9%	26	1	19%	26	13	50%
	Field Support Supv.	3	0	0%	4	0	0%	3	0	0%
	Supervisor	24	6	25%	28	1	14%	28	2	7%
	Total	154	38	25%	183.5	40	22%	179	66	37%
Southern	Investigator	94	54	57%	115	39	34%	103	44	43%
	Senior Investigator	21	4	19%	23	3	13%	26	6	23%
	Field Support Supv.	3	0	0%	3	0	0%	3	0	0%
	Supervisor	21	2	10%	25	1	4%	25	10	40%
	Total	139	60	43%	166	43	26%	157	60	38%
Statewide	Investigator	894	350	39%	1066.5	411	39%	1062	478	45%
	Senior Investigator	189	30	15%	216	37	17%	218	59	27%
	Field Support Supv.	21	1	5%	34	0	0%	26	0	0%
	Supervisor	195	30	15%	229	23	10%	230	38	17%
	Total	1,299	411	32%	1,545.5	471	30%	1536	575	37%

Source: Florida Department of Children and Families, HR-Public Reports, Position Funding Statewide SFY 2013-14, SFY 2014-15, and State of Florida People First Data Warehouse as of July 26, 2016.

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 the statewide Recruitment Coordinators to refine both the CPI 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 Protection 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 8% over the past year (180, up from 167) this improvement has been more than offset by nearly a 28% loss in child protection staff having a Master's of Social Work degree leaving the field (49, down from 68). 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

Subsection 402.402(1), F.S. 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 26, 2016, a People First data extract indicated there were 1,521 active FTE child protective investigative positions within the People First data system, of which 1,318 were identified as having a bachelor's degree; 199 were identified as having a master's degree; two were identified as having a doctorate degree; and two had associate degrees.

Of the 1,538 FTE child protective investigative staff listed in the People First data set 229 held a degree in social work (180 baccalaureates and 49 masters' degrees). The total percentage of active FTE child protective investigative staff currently holding a degree in social work is 15.1 percent. The 229 total represents a net loss of six from the previous year's mark of 235.

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

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 7/24/2016

Degree Type	Northwest	Northeast	Central	SunCoast	Southeast	Southern	Statewide
Baccalaureate Degree Social Work	47 (23%)	24 (7%)	53 (11%)	12 (8%)	29 (17%)	15 (10%)	180 (12%)
Master's Degree Social Work	10 (5%)	10 (3%)	15 (3%)	0 (0%)	6 (3%)	8 (5%)	49 (3%)
Baccalaureate Degree Psychology, Sociology, Counseling, Special Education, Education, Human Development, Child Development, Family Development, Marriage and Family Therapy or Nursing	51 (25%)	145 (41%)	161 (33%)	55 (37%)	49 (28%)	50 (32%)	511 (34%)
Master's Degree Psychology, Sociology, Counseling, Special Education, Education, Human Development, Child Development, Family Development, Marriage and Family Therapy or Nursing	10 (5%)	23 (6%)	30 (6%)	3 (2%)	5 (2%)	3 (2%)	74 (5%)
Baccalaureate Degree Other	74 (37%)	132 (37%)	205 (42%)	73 (49%)	79 (45%)	64 (42%)	627 (41%)
Master's Degree Other	9 (5%)	20 (6%)	20 (4%)	6 (4%)	7 (4%)	14 (9%)	76 (5%)
Associates Degree	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (<1%)	0 (0%)	1 (<1%)	0 (0%)	2 (<1%)
Baccalaureate Degree Total	172 (86%)	301 (85%)	419 (86%)	140 (93%)	157 (89%)	129 (84%)	1,318 (87%)
Master's Degree Total	29 (14%)	53 (15%)	65 (13%)	9 (11%)	18 (10%)	25 (16%)	199 (13%)
Doctorate Degree Total	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (<1%)	1 (<1%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (<1%)
Total Employed as of 7/26/2016*	201 (100%)	354 (100%)	486 (100%)	150 (100%)	176 (100%)	154 (100%)	1,521 (100%)

Source: State of Florida People First Data Warehouse as of July 26, 2016. * This number does not include vacant positions

An additional 586 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, and nursing (511 baccalaureate, 74 master's degrees, and 1 doctorate degree) for a percentage of active FTE child protective investigative staff that hold a secondary preferred degree of 39 percent.

Department of Children and Families 2016 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 two-week period from August 5, 2016 –

August 19, 2016. 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 29.4 percent participation or return rate (438 respondents) with a very even distribution related to time spent on the job. Of the 438 respondents, 25% had less than 1 year on the job, 23% had two years' experience, 31% had three to five years' experience, and 22% five years 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	16%	48%	24%	12%	433
Two	The training I received prepared me for the Child Protective Investigator role	14%	55%	24%	7%	436
Three	The training I received prepared me for the Child Protective Investigator Supervisor role	8%	33%	39%	20%	130
Four	The ongoing training I receive is adequate	8%	61%	25%	6%	431
Five	My immediate supervisor communicates job expectations and responsibilities clearly	40%	41%	11%	8%	437
Six	I feel like Senior Management (Program Administrator and above) "has my back"	12%	39%	30%	19%	433
Seven	My immediate supervisor provides me with timely feedback	34%	45%	14%	7%	435
Eight	My immediate supervisor provides me with fair and honest feedback	35%	48%	12%	6%	434
Nine	I have sufficient discretion to perform my job and make informed decisions	21%	55%	17%	7%	436
Ten	My supervisor appreciates my work	32%	47%	15%	6%	435
Eleven	My workload is manageable	4%	36%	27%	33%	435
Twelve	Senior Management appreciates my work	11%	48%	25%	16%	430
Thirteen	If I struggle with my workload I can ask for assistance	13%	44%	30%	13%	435
Fourteen	I have enough time for my personal life	2%	24%	35%	39%	438
Fifteen	During my weekends I have at least one day without work responsibilities	6%	35%	32%	27%	435
Fifteen	The Department offers career paths for Child Protective Investigators	8%	61%	20%	11%	437

Source: The Department of Children and Families 2016 Annual Child Protective Investigation Survey Results. Run Date 8/5/2016 - 8/19/2016

On a very 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).

Unfortunately, there is also a very 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,” scoring 9.53 and 9.41, respectively.

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	2	3	5	33	26	59	77	56	172	436	8.30
Two	Fair Treatment from Supervisor and Managers	1	0	0	1	8	11	15	45	66	286	433	9.31
Three	Base Pay	2	2	2	2	17	18	32	42	53	266	436	8.97
Four	Overtime Pay	11	4	5	3	21	27	26	38	50	249	434	8.7
Five	Discretionary Performance Bonus	14	6	7	4	39	26	36	45	52	204	433	8.2
Six	Job-Related Training	1	0	1	2	13	13	39	51	77	236	433	8.98
Seven	Immediate Supervisor Recognition for Work	10	4	10	14	37	57	73	64	48	118	435	7.51
Eight	Senior Management Recognition for Work	15	6	7	23	45	60	72	53	44	108	433	7.23
Nine	Time Off with No Work Responsibilities	4	1	0	3	7	7	12	22	50	327	433	9.41
Ten	Temporary Relief from Caseload Rotation	7	1	3	5	9	14	26	50	52	268	435	8.96
Eleven	Availability of Support	1	0	0	1	10	12	34	56	79	243	436	9.07
Twelve	Ability to Manage Work and Personal Life	1	0	1	1	4	4	12	32	47	333	435	9.53
Thirteen	Career Advancement Opportunities	3	2	3	7	14	26	34	55	67	224	435	8.72

Source: The Department of Children and Families 2015 Annual Child Protective Investigation Survey Results. Run Date 8/5/2016 - 8/19/2016

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. High turnover rates in the field of child protection, particularly within the child protective investigator class continue to strain and challenge even the most dedicated and experienced investigator, much less new recruits to the profession. While developing and retaining a qualified and highly proficient workforce remains the Department's top priority, the ability to achieve this outcome is dependent upon a common appreciation that staffing patterns should be adjusted to take into account vacancies (i.e., filled, not allocated positions) as well as the recognition that training and the use of sick and annual leave also need to be factored in for adequate staffing if Florida's high turnover rate is to be adequately addressed.