

***Presentation to the 2019 Health and Human Services
Joint Appropriation Subcommittee***

**Child and Family Services Division
Economic Security Services Branch
Department of Public Health and Human Services**

The following topics are covered in this report:

- Overview
- Summary of Major Functions
- Highlights and Accomplishments during the 2019 Biennium
- Funding and FTE Information
- Change Packages

Overview

Child and Family Services Division (CFSD) provides critical services to protect children in Montana from child abuse and neglect. This division operates a child welfare system that works 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, from 32 different offices across Montana, to fulfill its mission of “keeping children safe and families strong.” We work to achieve high-quality permanency and well-being outcomes for the children and families we serve.

This division continues to work diligently to improve its child welfare practice model; to develop a comprehensive work force development plan to recruit, train, and retain high-quality staff; and to implement a continuous quality improvement system that ensures rapid cycle feedback loops are in place to make the work more efficient and effective. Despite the traumatic and difficult issues underlying the work, we have committed and skilled staff who continue to do this truly life-changing work every day to protect Montana’s children from abuse and neglect.

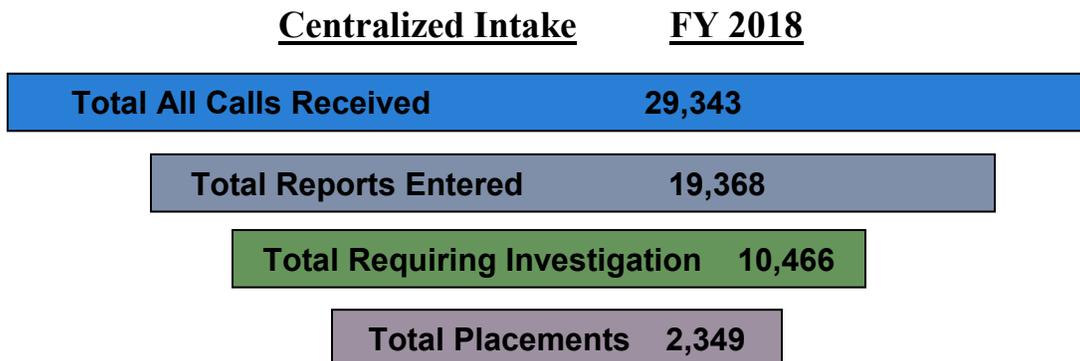
Child safety is too important to do this work by ourselves. To keep children safe, CFSD, the judicial system, community service providers, and others collaborate to provide a continuum of services that ensure the safety of children. This team works to support the strengths of families, as well as increase each family’s ability to provide a safe, healthy, and nurturing environment for their children. Due to the complexity of clients’ needs, we rely on community service providers to provide direct services to children and families, such as education, parenting classes, child care, mental health, substance abuse, medical, and dental services. CFSD cases require ongoing communication and interaction among the myriad stakeholders to achieve safety, permanency, and well-being for children. The core services provided by this division and the initiatives aimed to improve outcomes are described more fully in the following sections.

Summary of Major Functions

Child Abuse Reporting and Investigation/Assessment

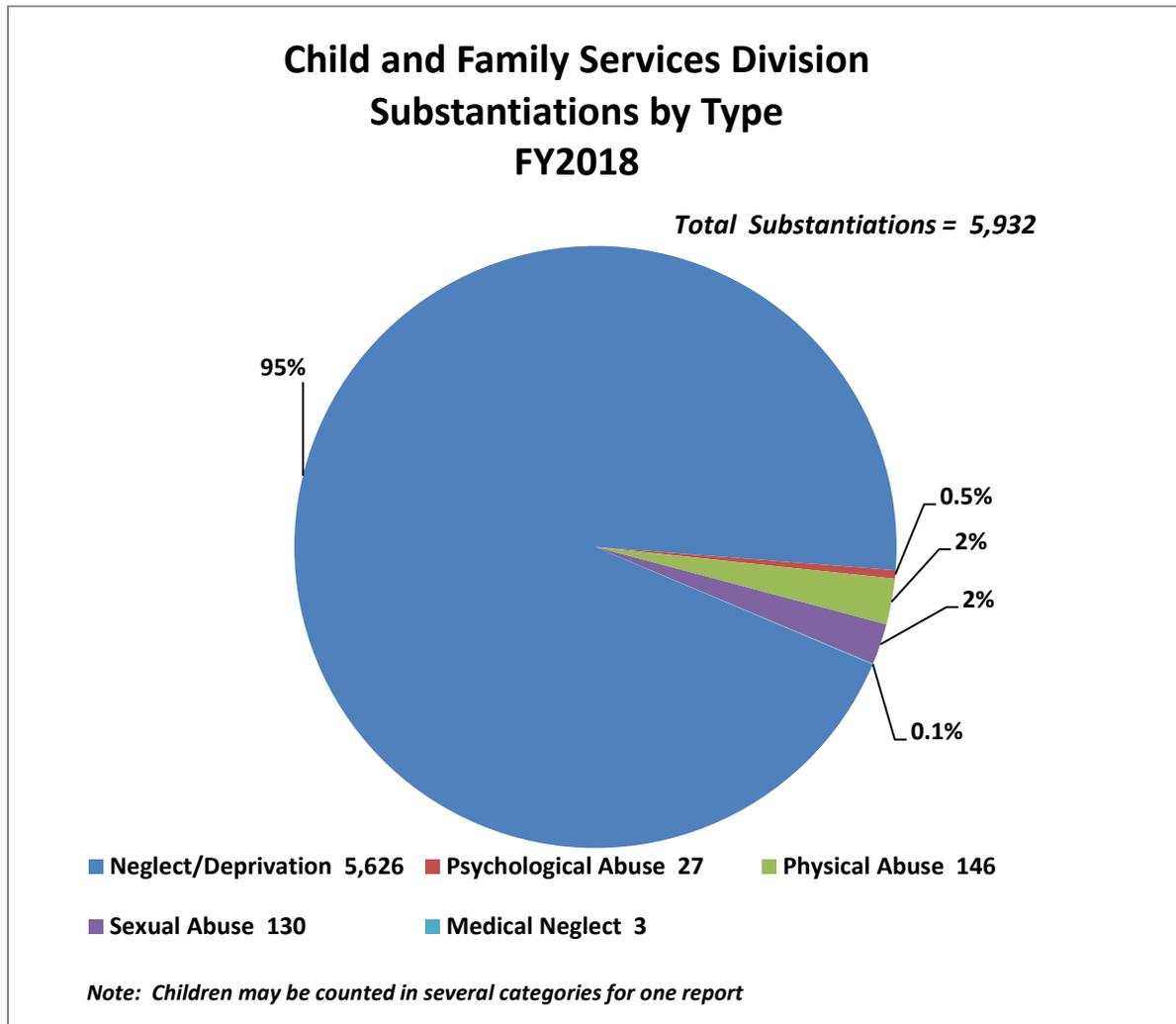
We operate a toll-free child abuse hotline that takes calls 24 hours a day, every day of the year. Upon receipt of a report, a Centralized Intake Specialist reviews the information and determines whether it meets the statutory requirements for investigation. The field staff respond to emergency calls at any time, day or night, when necessary to ensure the safety of children.

The following chart shows in FY 2018, Montana citizens called Centralized Intake (CI) approximately 29,000 times. Of those calls, over 19,000 of them required documentation within our system and 10,500 required investigation. We do our work diligently to assess families to ensure we only serve children who are unsafe. Staff must make a determination on all reports regarding whether the maltreatment occurred. Our safety model, named Montana Safety Assessment and Management System (SAMS), guides workers and supervisor through the investigation and decision-making process. The second chart outlines the type of maltreatment and the number of reports that were substantiated, approximately 6,000.



15,699 Children involved in Investigations

Child and Family Services Division Substantiations by type are as follows:



Safety and Reunification Services

In addition to receiving and investigating reports of child abuse and neglect, we also provide in-home safety services to prevent placement of children into foster care, out-of-home safety services, and reunification services that include working with the parents to identify those services needed to reunite the parents and child safely. Reunification is our primary goal.

We make every effort to keep children safe within their home. To this end, CFSD provides in-home services to preserve, strengthen, and stabilize families. Community providers are an important resource that help us facilitate these services. In addition, upon a child's placement in out-of-home care, the Child Protection Specialist works with the child's parents to develop and implement a court-ordered treatment plan. This plan is designed to provide the services necessary to address and resolve those issues that led to the out-of-home placement; thereby, allowing the child to safely return to the home.

Services Include:

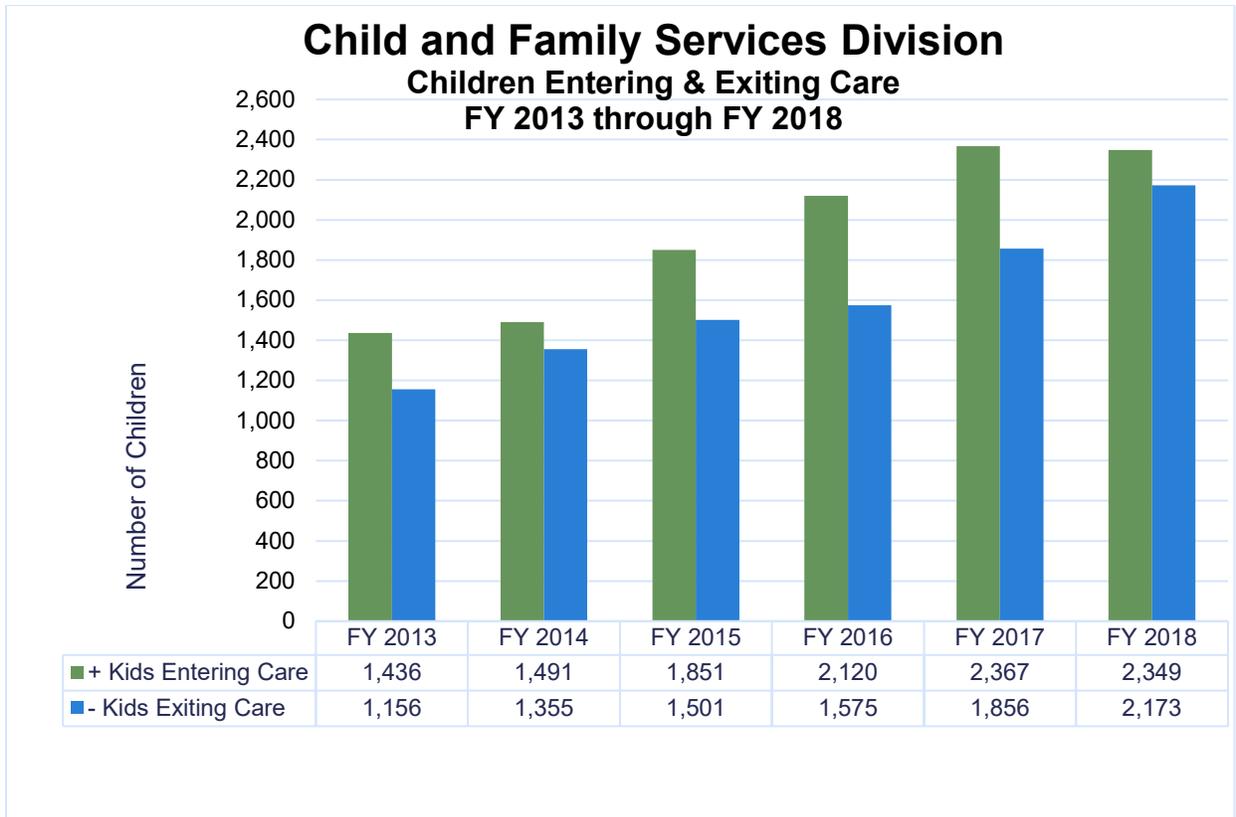
- Substance abuse treatment
- Drug and alcohol monitoring
- Mental health treatment
- Parenting classes
- Stress and anger management
- Budgeting
- Transportation
- Child care/respite
- Home visiting services

Reunification with his/her parents is the primary permanency goal for the child. **It is important to highlight that 65% of children in foster care in Montana are returned to their parents.**

When children cannot safely remain in their home, they experience less trauma and disruption when they are placed with relatives or families with whom they have prior significant relationships. We make diligent efforts to locate relatives and place children with them whenever possible and in the best interests of the child. **Montana continues to be one of the leading states nationally utilizing kinship placements. Fifty-three percent (53%) of all children in foster care are placed with relatives.** If a safe and appropriate relative cannot be identified, a child may be placed in a licensed foster family or other licensed youth care facility.

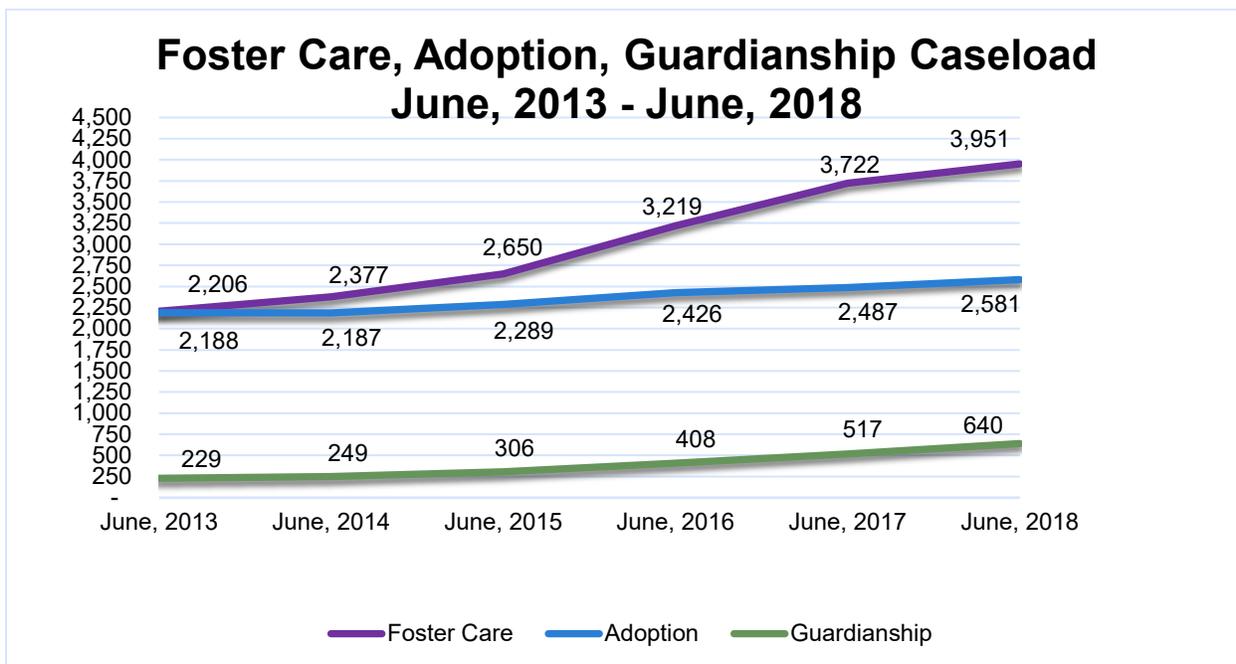
The current number of kids in care has stabilized to approximately 3,900 over the last several months. We are proud of the work we have done to increase the number of children who are able to exit the system from foster care to find permanent placement.

The chart on the next page illustrates the improving trend of children exiting foster care, while the rate of children entering is stabilizing.



Permanency for Youth

Finding safe and permanent placements for children is the top priority for this division. We employ all of the tools possible to find permanency for children. Permanency for youth can be achieved in different ways. As previously stated, most children are returned home—65% in FY 2018. However, every child deserves a “forever home” that is safe and permanent. If a child cannot safely return to his or her home, we identify and implement an alternative permanency plan for the child. The following chart outlines the growth of caseloads within foster care, adoption, and guardianship.



Adoption

Adoption represents one permanency option for children who are unable to safely return home. In FY 2018, 16% of children were adopted. Adoptions may be finalized with a subsidy to help meet the needs of the children. The subsidies can be funded throughout their childhood. Adoption subsidies are currently in place for approximately 2,600 children.

Guardianship

Guardianship is another permanency option that is similar to adoption, but does not require termination of parental rights. Eleven percent (11%) of children in FY 2018 entered into a guardianship with their substitute caregiver. Guardianships also can be finalized with a subsidy. As of June 30, 2018, a total of 640 subsidized guardianships had been established through CFSD.

Transition Services

Youth who age out of foster care or are at risk of aging out of foster care are eligible for transition services. We contract with community service providers to provide these services as part of the Montana Foster Care Independence Program, also referred to as Chaffee.

These services include:

- Life skills instruction
- A structured support system when/if needed
- Education and Training Vouchers (ETVs)
- Individualized transitional living plans
- Assistance with obtaining employment

- Life Skills Assessment
- Mentorship
- Assistance with independent living costs
- Youth Advisory Board opportunities

In FY 2018, 4% of youth aged out of foster care. Without this program, we would be unable to provide the services they need to achieve a successful transition into adulthood. We are seeing an increase of youth attending college or other type of secondary type of education due to the support Chaffee offers.

Highlights and Accomplishments During the 2019 Biennium

Workforce Development and Retention

Guiding Leadership Principles

CFSD's management team established Guiding Leadership Principles to engage all staff in a vision of family and community engagement, team decision-making, data awareness, transparency, and continual improvement. This is a cornerstone of our workforce development and retention efforts that allow CFSD staff to fulfill its mission of keeping children safe and families strong.

Workforce Development Plan

Staff and supervisors report a need for more training support in the field. As a response, we hired Field Training Lead Specialists to provide on-the-job coaching and mentoring throughout the first year of employment. In addition, we continue our collaboration with the University of Montana's Workforce Development Center. Each Region has a consultant that partners with the Field Training Specialist to enhance practice, while supporting the workers.

Montana Family Safety Information System (MFSIS)

One of our biggest accomplishments was MFSIS Phase One going live! MFSIS is the project to replace, in a modular approach, the business functions of the CAPS mainframe child welfare management system.

The primary goal for MFSIS is to improve the availability and quality of the information. Real-time and accurate information is necessary for the effective delivery of timely and appropriate services required to protect Montana's children, to help strengthen Montana families, and to provide program integrity. The goal will be achieved by providing modern and user-friendly technologies that comply with state and federal requirements, as well as leveraging existing architecture and technology already in use in Montana.

The initial phase of the project modernized the intake and investigations phases of this work. The automated functionality of these processes is new for our workers, and for the first time integrates with the downstream processes. It has made an immediate impact on the efficiency and effectiveness of the work we do, which positively impacts the safety and well-being of those we work with.

Collaborations

Tribal Consultation

This division, with the support of Department leadership, hosted a tribal consultation to share information and open communication between CFSD and Montana Tribes. This consultation highlights the importance of collaboration when working to establish safety and permanency for a child. As a result of this consultation, attendees committed to on-going communication and collaboration to improve outcomes for Indian children. The consultation facilitated a greater understanding of the historical trauma Native Americans have experienced throughout their lives

and how involvement with our agency is viewed and received. Our relationship with tribal communities is important to ensure the needs of Native American children in foster care are being met.

First Years Initiative

The First Years Initiative is an example of partnership, collaboration, and innovation aimed at improving the start to a child's life. This partnership between public health departments, non-profit organizations, and CFSD provides targeted resources, education, and evidenced-based services during the early critical period in the lives of children and their parents—pregnancy, the weeks and months after birth, and extending through the first years of a child's life. The focused goal of the First Years Initiative is to reduce child abuse, neglect, and child deaths in Montana.

Project ECHO

There are Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes (ECHO) projects all across the country targeting different areas of healthcare. Montana is one of the few utilizing it for improvements in child welfare. The ECHO model can be very valuable in rural states with limited resources and long distances between communities

Project ECHO is a partnership with CFSD, Billings Clinic, and University of Montana Center for Children, Families and Workforce Development. This ECHO linked medical experts from Billings Clinic and our staff for monthly 90-minute sessions to evaluate child abuse cases where children have experienced extreme trauma. Regional and national experts provided peer support, service knowledge enhancement, case discussions, and treatment planning each session.

An additional ECHO, called KEEP ECHO, was created to provide training and support directly to foster parents. KEEP ECHO is a video-based tele-mentoring program for foster parents. It features KEEP, a program developed to support foster parents with critical behavioral management skills for these vulnerable children – everything from positive communication to working through challenging behaviors.

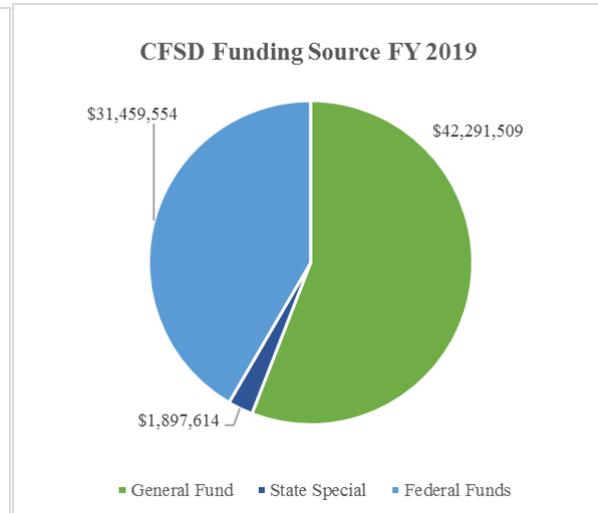
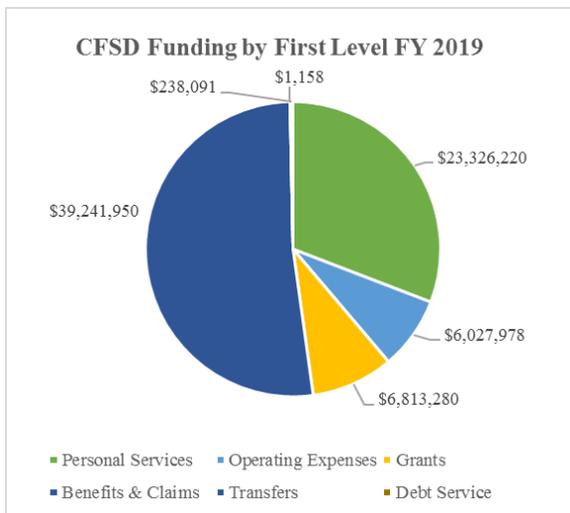
Child Abuse Neglect Fatality Commission

The 2017 Legislature passed a bill that created a commission to review child abuse fatalities and near fatalities. This Commission has met three times and released its first report in January. We have already used the information highlighted through this process and the Ombudsman 2017 report to create Enhanced Case Staffing for reports involving children under the age of 3 years old. By targeting reports with children under the age of 3, we can focus on our most vulnerable children. The enhanced case staffing employs team-decisions making and course-correction when necessary, which are two of our guiding principles.

The Child Abuse Fatality Commission has been implemented with the same “no blame, no shame” culture of the Domestic Violence Fatality Commission, which has been highly successful. As a result of the Governor's Protect Montana Kids Commission, the Child Abuse Neglect Fatality Commission will positively impact practice within this division. We believe in creating a culture of safety science, which looks to improve processes through systemic review of all fatalities, while supporting staff on an individual basis. The Commission aligns with our desire for a learning culture.

Funding & FTE Information

Child and Family Services	FY 2019 Budget	FY 2020 Request	FY 2021 Request
FTE	416.72	434.72	434.72
Personal Services	\$23,326,220	\$28,236,682	\$28,233,323
Operating Expenses	\$6,027,978	\$6,072,761	\$6,083,553
Grants	\$6,813,280	\$6,813,280	\$6,813,280
Benefits & Claims	\$39,241,950	\$59,624,891	\$64,753,257
Transfers	\$1,158	\$1,158	\$1,158
Debt Service	\$238,091	\$238,091	\$238,091
TOTAL COSTS	\$75,648,677	\$ 100,986,863	\$ 106,122,662
	FY 2019 Budget	FY 2020 Request	FY 2021 Request
General Fund	\$42,291,509	\$59,413,024	\$62,316,103
State Special	\$1,897,614	\$1,897,614	\$1,897,614
Federal Funds	\$31,459,554	\$39,676,225	\$41,908,945
TOTAL Funds	\$75,648,677	\$100,986,863	\$106,122,662



Change Packages-

Present Law Adjustments:

SWPL 1 Personal Services

The budget includes \$3,381,375 in FY 2020 and \$3,380,431 in FY 2021 to annualize various personal services costs including FY 2019 statewide pay plan, benefit rate adjustments, longevity adjustments related to incumbents in each position at the time of the snapshot, and vacancy savings.

Fiscal Year	General Fund	State Special	Federal Funds	Total Request
FY 2020	\$2,320,236	\$0	\$1,061,139	\$3,381,375
FY 2021	\$2,319,588	\$0	\$1,060,843	\$3,380,431
Biennium Total	\$4,639,824	\$0	\$2,121,982	\$6,761,806

SWPL 3 Inflation Deflation

This change package includes an increase of \$44,783 in FY 2020 and \$55,575 in FY 2021 to reflect budgetary changes generated from the application of inflation to specific expenditure accounts. Affected accounts include those associated with the statewide Motor Pool operated by the Department of Transportation.

Fiscal Year	General Fund	State Special	Federal Funds	Total Request
FY 2020	\$21,403	\$0	\$23,380	\$44,783
FY 2021	\$26,561	\$0	\$29,014	\$55,575
Biennium Total	\$47,964	\$0	\$52,394	\$100,358

PL 3001 Foster Care Caseload - CFS

This present law adjustment requests \$25,663,685 in total funds over the biennium, including general fund of \$9,216,235 in FY 2020 and \$10,387,565 in FY 2021 to fund the projected increases in the number of children entering foster care and to restore one-time-only funding from the 2017 Legislative Session for the current foster care population.

Fiscal Year	General Fund	State Special	Federal Funds	Total Request
FY 2020	\$9,216,235	\$0	\$2,601,711	\$11,817,946
FY 2021	\$10,387,565	\$0	\$3,458,174	\$13,845,739
Biennium Total	\$19,603,800	\$0	\$6,059,885	\$25,663,685

PL 3002 Adoption Caseload - CFSD

This present law adjustment requests \$11,039,092 in total funds over the biennium, including general fund of \$2,320,758 in FY 2020 and \$2,866,188 in FY 2021 to fund the projected increases in the number of finalized adoptions and the average cost per day in the subsidized adoption program and to restore one-time-only funding from the 2017 Legislative Session for the current subsidized adoption program.

Fiscal Year	General Fund	State Special	Federal Funds	Total Request
FY 2020	\$2,320,758	\$0	\$2,604,450	\$4,925,208
FY 2021	\$2,866,188	\$0	\$3,247,696	\$6,113,884
Biennium Total	\$5,186,946	\$0	\$5,852,146	\$11,039,092

PL 3003 Guardianship Caseload - CFSD

This present law adjustment requests \$7,533,022 in total funds over the biennium, including general fund of \$1,827,142 in FY 2020 and \$2,309,764 in FY 2021 to fund the projected increases in the number of finalized guardianships and the average cost per day in the subsidized guardianship program and to restore one-time-only funding from the 2017 Legislative Session for the current subsidized Adoption program.

Fiscal Year	General Fund	State Special	Federal Funds	Total Request
FY 2020	\$1,827,142	\$0	\$1,491,844	\$3,318,986
FY 2021	\$2,309,764	\$0	\$1,904,272	\$4,214,036
Biennium Total	\$4,136,906	\$0	\$3,396,116	\$7,533,022

PL 3004 Guardianship FMAP Adjustment - CFSD

This present law adjustment is necessary to maintain existing services for the guardianship program. The biennial funding increases general fund by \$10,679 and includes an offsetting adjustment in federal funds. The total cost for the program does not change.

Fiscal Year	General Fund	State Special	Federal Funds	Total Request
FY 2020	\$6,647	\$0	(\$6,647)	\$0
FY 2021	\$4,032	\$0	(\$4,032)	\$0
Biennium Total	\$10,679	\$0	(\$10,679)	\$0

PL 3005 Adoption FMAP Adjustment - CFSD

This present law adjustment is necessary to maintain existing services for the subsidized adoption program. The biennial funding increases general fund by \$116,860 and includes an offsetting adjustment in federal funds. The total cost for the program does not change.

Fiscal Year	General Fund	State Special	Federal Funds	Total Request
FY 2020	\$72,739	\$0	(\$72,739)	\$0
FY 2021	\$44,121	\$0	(\$44,121)	\$0
Biennium Total	\$116,860	\$0	(\$116,860)	\$0

PL 3006 Foster Care FMAP Adjustment - CFSD

This present law adjustment is necessary to maintain existing services for the foster care program. The biennial funding increases general fund by \$56,899 and includes an offsetting adjustment increase in federal funds. The total cost for the program does not change.

Fiscal Year	General Fund	State Special	Federal Funds	Total Request
FY 2020	\$35,417	\$0	(\$35,417)	\$0
FY 2021	\$21,482	\$0	(\$21,482)	\$0
Biennium Total	\$56,899	\$0	(\$56,899)	\$0

PL 3007 Overtime/Differential - CFSD

This present law adjustment is to maintain existing services for the Child and Family Services Division. This change package requests \$985,220 in total funds for the biennium, including \$344,828 per year in general fund and \$147,782 in federal funds. The increase is necessary to fully fund the overtime to maintain staffing levels in addition to what is funded in SWPL 1.

Fiscal Year	General Fund	State Special	Federal Funds	Total Request
FY 2020	\$344,828	\$0	\$147,782	\$492,610
FY 2021	\$344,828	\$0	\$147,782	\$492,610
Biennium Total	\$689,656	\$0	\$295,564	\$985,220

New Proposals

NP 3008 PRI - Foster Care - CFSD

This new proposal requests a 0.91% provider rate increase in FY 2020 and a 1.83% increase in FY 2021 for foster care in the Child and Family Services Division. This percentage increase in rates is the same percentage applied in the Executive Budget to K-12 Schools, Office of Public Defender providers, and Corrections services providers. This change package requests \$1,183,221 in total funds over the biennium and \$936,725 in general fund.

Fiscal Year	General Fund	State Special	Federal Funds	Total Request
FY 2020	\$177,866	\$0	\$46,656	\$224,522
FY 2021	\$758,859	\$0	\$199,840	\$958,699
Biennium Total	\$936,725	\$0	\$246,496	\$1,183,221

NP 3009 PRI - Subsidized Adoption - CFSD

This new proposal requests a 0.91% provider rate increase in FY 2020 and a 1.83% increase in FY 2021 for subsidized adoption in the Child and Family Services Division. This percentage increase in rates is the same percentage applied in the Executive Budget to K-12 Schools, Office of Public Defender providers, and Corrections services providers. This change package requests \$270,943 in total funds over the biennium and \$140,270 in general fund.

Fiscal Year	General Fund	State Special	Federal Funds	Total Request
FY 2020	\$24,936	\$0	\$28,395	\$53,331
FY 2021	\$115,334	\$0	\$102,278	\$217,612
Biennium Total	\$140,270	\$0	\$130,673	\$270,943

NP 3010 PRI - Subsidized Guardianship - CFSD

This new proposal requests a 0.91% provider rate increase in FY 2020 and a 1.83% increase in FY 2021 for subsidized guardianship in the Child and Family Services Division. This percentage increase in rates is the same percentage applied in the Executive Budget to K-12 Schools, Office of Public Defender providers, and Corrections services providers. This change package requests \$111,016 in total funds over the biennium and \$64,348 in general fund.

Fiscal Year	General Fund	State Special	Federal Funds	Total Request
FY 2020	\$11,504	\$0	\$8,401	\$19,905
FY 2021	\$52,844	\$0	\$38,267	\$91,111
Biennium Total	\$64,348	\$0	\$46,668	\$111,016

NP 3011 PRI - Grants and Contracts - CFSD

This new proposal requests a 0.91% provider rate increase in FY 2020 and a 1.83% increase in FY 2021 for grants and contract providers in the Child and Family Services Division. This percentage increase in rates is the same percentage applied in the Executive Budget to K-12 Schools, Office of Public Defender providers, and Corrections services providers. This change package requests \$93,269 in total funds over the biennium and \$65,855 in general fund

Fiscal Year	General Fund	State Special	Federal Funds	Total Request
FY 2020	\$16,270	\$0	\$6,773	\$23,043
FY 2021	\$49,585	\$0	\$20,641	\$70,226
Biennium Total	\$65,855	\$0	\$27,414	\$93,269

NP 3012 Transfer of Existing FTE - CFSD

This new proposal requests the transfer of 18.00 FTE from the Developmental Services Division to support existing operations in the Child and Family Services Division. This change package requests \$2,070,539 in total funds over the biennium and \$1,449,377 in general fund.

Fiscal Year	General Fund	State Special	Federal Funds	Total Request
FY 2020	\$725,534	\$0	\$310,943	\$1,036,477
FY 2021	\$723,843	\$0	\$310,219	\$1,034,062
Biennium Total	\$1,449,377	\$0	\$621,162	\$2,070,539