



**Child Protective Investigator and Child  
Protective Investigator Supervisor Educational  
Qualifications, Turnover, Professional  
Advancement, and Working Conditions  
Status Report  
ANNUAL REPORT**

Department of Children and Families

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, professional advancement, and working conditions of the department's Child Protective Investigator Supervisor, Child Protective Investigator's, 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

Through Secretary Poppell's "Elevate DCF" initiative, the department has focused on transitioning from a crisis-focused agency to a prevention-minded agency by improving the safety and well-being of children and families statewide. The department is working to operationalize and hardwire prevention into the culture and practice of the department, modernize and create efficiencies in our systems to improve workforce stability and capacity, improve accountability and quality across all systems, and improve financial health by leveraging all revenue sources to improve the service array in our communities. The Office of Child Welfare is operationalizing and hardwiring a prevention approach in all aspects of Florida's child welfare system to reduce the number of families in crisis. Given that families entering the child welfare system can present with multiple needs, there is the opportunity to not only maintain child safety but also provide services that may address additional needs for behavioral health and economic independence. This more comprehensive approach can reduce the number of families entering our system in the future and prevent further states of crisis.

Department team members who are a part of the child protective investigations team provide critical services to ensure and improve the safety of children in Florida. This report outlines the status of these positions and team members including distribution of investigative staff across the state, vacancy rate, workload, supervisory support, retention, qualifications of current staff, and employee satisfaction.

## General Statutory Requirements

Chapter 39, Florida Statutes, outlines child protective investigator responsibilities for all child-related reports accepted by the Florida Abuse Hotline (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 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. In State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2020-2021, the Legislature provided employee compensation for eligible investigators. Effective July 1, 2020, CPIs and Sr. CPIs received a 10% salary increase, and Child Protective Investigator Supervisors (CPIS) and Child Protective Field Support Consultants received a 5% increase to their base rate of pay. Approximately 1,648 employees in the CPI Classification received the 10% increase in July 2020. The department also has a Merit Pay Program that was implemented by Secretary Poppell for Career Service and Selected Exempt Service employees. This program provides an opportunity for management to reward their eligible employees for exceptional performance beyond normal expectations. Approximately 120 employees in the CPI Classification received a Merit Pay increase in October 2020.

The class titles and annual base salaries for each of the classes are:

- Child Protective Investigator: \$39,600
- Senior Child Protective Investigator - \$41,500;
- Child Protective Investigator – Child Protective Field Support Consultant - \$46,900;
- Child Protective Investigator Supervisor – SES - \$49,200; and
- Critical Child Safety Practice Expert - \$55,000.

## 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 1,633 positions statewide within the child protective investigation job class on July 20, 2020, with 69 FTEs (4 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.

<b>Table 1 – Classification and Vacancies of the Department Child Protective Investigative Positions as of 7/20/2020</b>				
Region	Class Title	Position Allocation as of 7/20/2020	Total Vacant Positions as of 7/20/2020	Percentage of Positions Vacant as of 7/20/2020
Northwest	Child Protective Investigator	130	15	11.54%
	Senior Child Protective Investigator	42	0	0.00%
	Child Protective Investigator – Field Support Supervisor	4	0	0.00%
	Child Protective Investigator Supervisor - SES	35	3	8.57%
<b>Total</b>		<b>211</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>8.53%</b>
Northeast	Child Protective Investigator	241	9	3.73%
	Senior Child Protective Investigator	54	0	0.00%
	Child Protective Investigator – Field Support Supervisor	16	0	0.00%
	Child Protective Investigator Supervisor - SES	61	1	1.64%
<b>Total</b>		<b>372</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>2.69%</b>
Central	Child Protective Investigator	340	3	0.88%
	Senior Child Protective Investigator	78	3	3.85%
	Child Protective Investigator – Field Support Supervisor	42	0	0.00%
	Child Protective Investigator Supervisor - SES	83	3	3.61%
<b>Total</b>		<b>543</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1.66%</b>
SunCoast	Child Protective Investigator	113	11	9.73%
	Senior Child Protective Investigator	24	7	29.17%
	Child Protective Investigator – Field Support Supervisor	4	0	0.00%
	Child Protective Investigator Supervisor - SES	25	2	8.00%
<b>Total</b>		<b>166</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>12.05%</b>
Southeast	Child Protective Investigator	125	3	2.40%
	Senior Child Protective Investigator	26	0	0.00%
	Child Protective Investigator – Field Support Supervisor	4	0	0.00%
	Child Protective Investigator Supervisor - SES	31	0	0.00%
<b>Total</b>		<b>186</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1.61%</b>
Southern	Child Protective Investigator	95	6	6.32%
	Senior Child Protective Investigator	22	2	9.09%
	Child Protective Investigator – Field Support Supervisor	10	1	10.00%
	Child Protective Investigator Supervisor - SES	28	0	0.00%
<b>Total</b>		<b>155</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5.18%</b>
Statewide	Child Protective Investigator	1044	47	4.50%
	Senior Child Protective Investigator	246	12	4.88%

Region	Class Title	Position Allocation as of 7/20/2020	Total Vacant Positions as of 7/20/2020	Percentage of Positions Vacant as of 7/20/2020
	Child Protective Investigator – Field Support Supervisor	80	1	1.25%
	Child Protective Investigator Supervisor - SES	263	9	3.42%
<b>Total</b>		<b>1633</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>4.23%</b>

Source: People First Data Warehouse Vacancy Report as of July 20, 2020. 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 2020 Department of Children and Families Annual Child Protective Investigation Survey (Table 7, page 14) 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 Hotline intakes assigned each month as an “Initial” or “Additional” investigation to CPIs and Sr. CPIs. 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 2019-20 the department conducted 134,686 child protective investigations (sheriff’s offices investigations excluded). The trend in investigations conducted (excluding Special Condition Referrals and Institutional Investigations) for the past 12 months reflect that the numbers for SFY 2019-20 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 last fiscal year.

The global pandemic impacted the state of Florida beginning in early March 2020. This pandemic affected the number of calls to the Hotline as there was a decrease in the number of calls in comparison to 2019. The decrease in intakes simultaneously decreased the average CPI caseload. In 2019, during the months of March through June, the average case load per month per CPI was 11.08, 11.40, 11.53, and 9.60 respectively. In 2020, during the same

months, the case load averages were 8.86, 6.57, 7.28, and 7.69 respectively. Looking towards the future, call volume and caseloads began to return to pre-pandemic levels with the start of the new school year.

Region	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19*	2019-20*
Northwest Region	16,644	16,745	17,998	19,178	19,413	19,068	17,460	15,191
Northeast Region	30,084	30,852	31,481	32,957	33,924	32,135	31,222	26,800
Central Region*	43,015	43,991	45,116	46,507	47,658	46,981	45,527	56,158
SunCoast Region*	13,055	13,589	13,650	14,286	15,367	14,311	14,016	12,730
Southeast Region*	15,373	15,835	15,786	15,908	16,719	15,797	15,349	13,285
Southern Region	13,499	13,983	13,841	13,844	14,474	13,478	12,631	10,522
Investigative Totals*	131,670	134,995	137,872	142,680	147,555	141,770	136,205	134,686

Source: Child Protective Investigation Trend Reports as of September 11, 2018 for 2012 to SFY 2018. Child Welfare Dashboard for SFY 2018-19 and 2019-20.

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 several 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 was retrieved from the Child Welfare Key Indicators Monthly Report from July 2020 and illustrates the number of Special Condition Referrals by Type over a six-year time period. The increase in reports 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 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

\*Sheriff’s Offices Excluded



Graph1

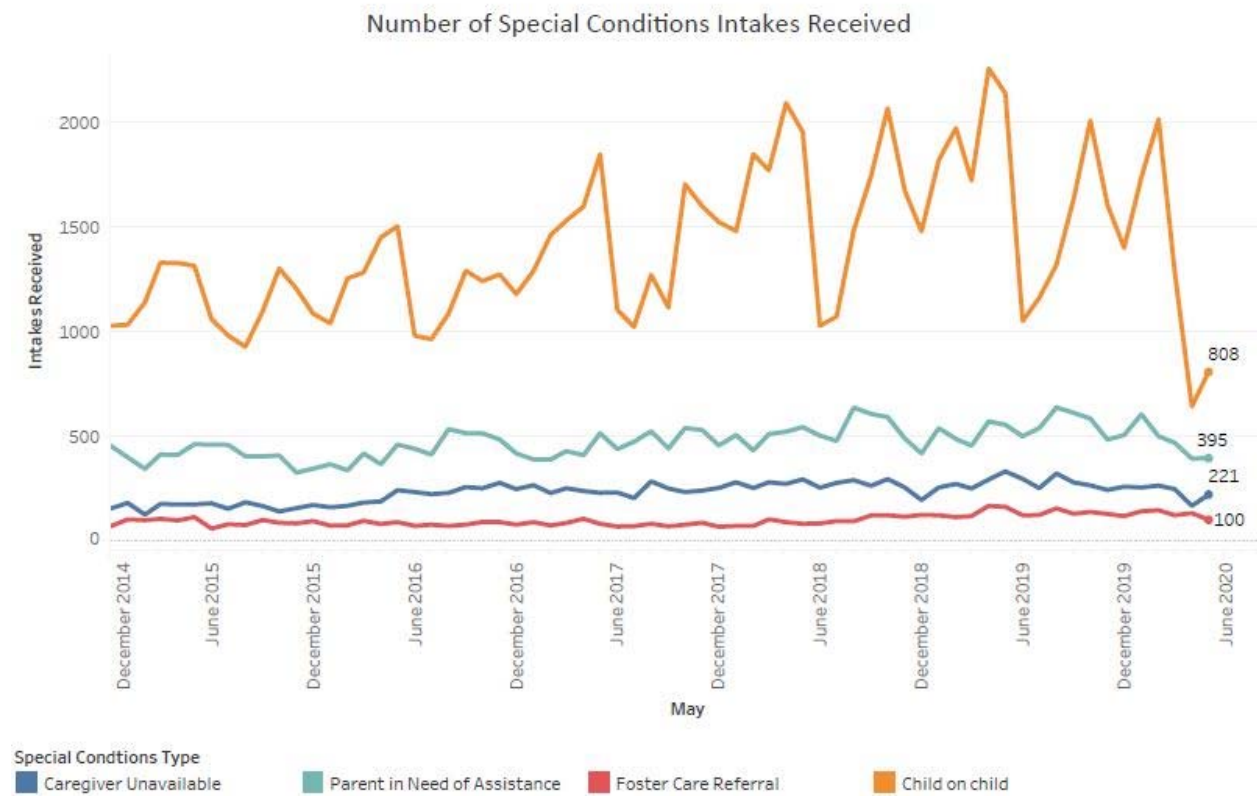


Table 3 provides the average monthly number of new investigations assigned to CPIs and Sr. CPIs by region for department child abuse investigations based upon allocated and filled positions for SFY 2019-20. While several child protection professionals (e.g., Field Support Supervisors, Quality Assurance 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 2019-20.**

	Region	Total Investigations (Initial and Additional)	Allocated CPI / Sr. CPI Investigators as of 7/26/20	Average Monthly New Cases Per Allocated Position	Filled CPI / Sr. CPI Positions as of 7/26/20	Average Monthly New Cases Per Actual Filled Positions
SFY 2018-19	Northwest	15,191	190	7	154	8
	Northeast	26,800	308	7	292	8
	Central	56,158	427	11	393	12
	SunCoast	12,730	159	7	119	9
	Southeast	13,285	170	8	148	7
	Southern	10,522	125	7	108	8
	Statewide	134,686	1379	8	1214	9

Source: Child Welfare Dashboard as of July 20, 2020 and People First Data Warehouse Vacancy Report as of July 26, 2020.

The monthly average of new investigations per allocated CPI and Sr. CPI positions statewide was nine for SYF 2019-20. 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 July 26, 2020.

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 workdays 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 2016-17			Position Allocation SFY 2017-18			Position Allocation SFY 2018-19			Position Allocation SFY 2019-20		
	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	169	31	5.5	167	32	5.2	168	35	4.8	190	35	5.4
Northeast	296	51	5.8	296	51	5.8	300	61	4.9	308	61	5
Central	417	73	5.7	416	73	5.7	431	83	5.2	427	83	5.1
SunCoast	131	22	6	131	22	6	137	25	5.5	159	25	6.4
Southeast	140	28	5	140	28	5	151	31	4.9	170	31	5.5
Southern	116	25	4.6	125	25	5	123	28	4.4	125	28	4.5
Statewide	1269	230	5.5	1275	231	5.5	1310	263	5.0	1379	263	5.2

Source: State of Florida People First Data Warehouse as of July 21, 2017, June 30, 2018, June 24, 2019, and July 20, 2020.

### 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 37.30, and 34.80 percent, respectively. Turnover rates for only the CPI positions over the past two years have averaged 48.10, and 46.12 percent, respectively. The statewide turnover rate for supervisors over this same time-period averaged 13.11 and 10.81 percent, respectively.

**Table 5 – Turnover Rate of Department Child Protective Investigation Positions by Region and Class Title**

Region	Class Title	SYF 2018-19			SYF 2019-20		
		Ave # Emp	Separated	Rate	Ave # Emp	Separated	Rate
Northwest	Investigator	127.5	54	42.35%	128.75	74	57.48%
	Senior Investigator	36	11	30.56%	39	2	5.13%
	Field Support Supervisor	4	1	25.00%	4	0	0.00%
	Supervisor	33.5	5	14.93%	34.25	3	8.76%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>35.32%</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>38.35%</b>
Northeast	Investigator	232.5	110	47.31%	236.75	104	43.93%
	Senior Investigator	45	8	17.78%	49.5	9	18.18%
	Field Support Supervisor	10	1	10.00%	13	1	7.69%
	Supervisor	54	10	18.52%	57.5	6	10.43%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>341.5</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>37.77%</b>	<b>356.75</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>33.64%</b>
Central	Investigator	345.5	147	42.55%	342.75	146	42.60%
	Senior Investigator	72.5	10	13.79%	75.25	11	14.62%
	Field Support Supervisor	17	2	11.76%	29.5	1	3.39%
	Supervisor	73.5	9	12.24%	78.25	9	11.50%

	<b>Total</b>	<b>508.5</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>33.04%</b>	<b>525.75</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>31.76%</b>
SunCoast	Investigator	112	78	69.64%	112.5	61	54.22%
	Senior Investigator	19.5	2	10.26%	21.75	6	27.59%
	Field Support Supervisor	2.5	0	0.00%	3.25	0	0.00%
	Supervisor	20.5	0	0.00%	22.75	3	13.19%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>154.5</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>51.78%</b>	<b>160.25</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>43.68%</b>
Southeast	Investigator	128.5	67	52.14%	126.75	53	41.81%
	Senior Investigator	23.5	4	17.02%	24.75	5	20.20%
	Field Support Supervisor	3	0	0.00%	3.5	0	0.00%
	Supervisor	29.5	4	13.56%	30.25	4	13.22%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>184.5</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>40.65%</b>	<b>185.25</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>33.47%</b>
Southern	Investigator	91.5	43	46.99%	93.25	42	45.04%
	Senior Investigator	20	2	10.00%	21	7	33.33%
	Field Support Supervisor	6.5	1	15.38%	8.25	2	24.24%
	Supervisor	25.5	3	11.76%	26.75	2	7.48%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>143.5</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>34.15%</b>	<b>149.25</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>35.51%</b>
Statewide	Investigator	1037.5	499	48.10%	1040.75	480	46.12%
	Senior Investigator	216.5	37	17.09%	231.25	40	17.30%
	Field Support Supervisor	43	5	11.63%	61.5	4	6.50%
	Supervisor	236.5	31	13.11%	249.75	27	10.81%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1533.5</b>	<b>572</b>	<b>37.30%</b>	<b>1583.25</b>	<b>551</b>	<b>34.80%</b>

Source: Florida Department of Children and Families, HR Dashboard, Critical Class Turnover Summary by Location FY 2018-19 and FY 2019-20.

Note: 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 which cause an increase in their average caseloads. 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.

### Professional Advancement

Professional advancement is an important aspect in the retention of qualified child welfare professionals. Providing opportunities for growth and career advancement can help improve worker satisfaction. For SFY 2019-2020, there were 149 promotional advancements. Of those 149 advancements, approximately 86 percent were Child Protective Investigators (CPI) promoting into other positions. Of those CPI promotions, 116 promoted to Senior Child Protective Investigator positions, 7 promoted to a Child Protective Investigator Supervisor position, and 4 promoted into either a Field Support Consultant or Operations Review Specialist position. Of the 149 total advancements, CPIS promotions accounted for 11 percent. Of the CPIS promotions, 9 promoted to Program Administrator, 3 promoted to Critical Child Safety Practice Expert, 3 promoted to Operations Review Specialist, and 2 promoted to Family Safety Specialist. The remaining 3 percent of promotions were either Field Support Consultants or

Critical Child Safety Practice Experts promoting into other positions. Although still in development, the Career Ladder Initiative will aid in increasing promotions for CPI Class positions, providing additional opportunities for professional advancement.

## **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.<sup>1</sup>

### **Educational Attainment of Employed Child Protective Investigative Staff**

As of July 20, 2020, a People First data extract indicated there were 1,663 child protective investigative positions, including Other Personnel Services (OPS), of which 1,594 were identified as having a baccalaureate degree; 204 were identified as having a master's degree; four were identified as having a doctorate degree; and four were identified as educational data unavailable.

Of the 1,663 child protective investigative staff listed in the People First data set, 223 held a degree in social work (186 baccalaureates and 37 master's degrees). The total active child protective investigative staff currently holding a degree in social work is 13.4 percent. Table 6 provides a complete distribution of current educational backgrounds.

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<sup>1</sup> Section 402.402(1)(a)(b)&(c), Florida Statutes

Degree Type	Northwest	Northeast	Central	SunCoast	Southeast	Southern	Statewide
Baccalaureate Degree Social Work	38 (17%)	34 (9%)	51 (8%)	11 (6%)	28 (13%)	16 (9%)	186 (10%)
Master's Degree in Social Work	5 (2%)	9 (2%)	12 (2%)	4 (2%)	3 (1%)	4 (2%)	37 (2%)
Baccalaureate Degree in Psychology, Sociology, Counseling, Special Education, Education, Human Development, Child Development, Family Development, Marriage and Family Therapy or Nursing	39 (18%)	97 (24%)	161 (27%)	50 (28%)	39 (18%)	41 (23%)	427 (24%)
Master's Degree in Psychology, Sociology, Counseling, Special Education, Education, Human Development, Child Development, Family Development, Marriage and Family Therapy or Nursing	8 (4%)	15 (4%)	10 (2%)	2 (1%)	4 (2%)	3 (2%)	42 (2%)
Baccalaureate Degree Other	113 (51%)	194 (47%)	278 (46%)	101 (57%)	124 (58%)	92 (51%)	902 (50%)
Master's Degree Other	19 (9%)	37 (9%)	36 (6%)	6 (3%)	18 (8%)	19 (11%)	135 (7%)
Degree Data Unavailable	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	4 (2%)	4 (0.22%)
Baccalaureate Degree Total	190 (86%)	356 (87%)	546 (90%)	162 (92%)	191 (90%)	149 (83%)	1594 (88%)
Master's Degree Total	32 (14%)	54 (13%)	58 (10%)	12 (7%)	22 (10%)	26 (14%)	204 (11%)
Doctorate Degree Total	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.17%)	2 (1%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.56%)	4 (0.22%)
Total Child Investigative Positions Degree by Region as of 8/10/2020*	222 (13%)	410 (22%)	605 (34%)	176 (10%)	213 (13%)	180 (10%)	1806 **

Source: State of Florida People First Data Warehouse as of August 10, 2020. \* 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 1,697 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 31, 2020 to August 7, 2020. 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 55 percent participation or return rate (940 respondents) with a very even distribution related to time spent on the job. Of the 940 respondents, approximately 38 percent of Child Protective Investigators responded they had less than one year on the job, 34 percent had one to two years' experience, 16 percent had three to four years' experience, and 13 percent had five or more years' experience.

Of the 940 respondents, approximately 18 percent of Child Protective Investigator Supervisors noted they had less than one year on the job, 31 percent had one to two years' experience, 24 percent had three to four years' experience, and 27 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	22.32%	48.5%	19.74%	9.44%		932
Two*	The training I received prepared me for the Child Protective Investigator role	13.62%	55.18%	25.07%	6.13%		734
Three*	The training I received prepared me for the Child Protective Investigator Supervisor role	11.06%	47.24%	27.64%	8.04%	6.03%	199
Four	The ongoing training, I receive is adequate	15.45%	62.45%	18.03%	4.08%		932
Five	My immediate supervisor communicates job expectations and responsibilities clearly	46.99%	40.22%	9.25%	3.55%		930
Six	I feel like Senior Management (Program Administrator and above) "has my back."	19.35%	48.43%	20.54%	11.68%		925
Seven	My immediate supervisor provides me with timely feedback	43.70%	40.80%	11.30%	4.20%		929
Eight	My immediate supervisor provides me with fair and honest feedback	47.42%	40.45%	8.91%	3.22%		932
Nine	I have sufficient discretion to perform my job and make informed decisions	32.94%	53.76%	9.01%	4.29%		932
Ten	My supervisor appreciates my work	46.61%	40.80%	9.04%	3.55%		929
Eleven	My workload is manageable	11.08%	50.97%	25.48%	12.47%		930
Twelve	Senior Management appreciates my work	19.03%	50.49%	22.05%	8.43%		925
Thirteen	If I struggle with my workload, I can ask for assistance	19.85%	49.68%	23.82%	6.65%		932
Fourteen	I have enough time for my personal life	6.87%	34.80%	30.50%	27.82%		931
Fifteen	During my regularly scheduled time off, I have at least one day without work responsibilities	11.90%	44.05%	28.08%	15.97%		933
Sixteen	The department offers career paths for Child Protective Investigators	17.41%	56.32%	18.70%	7.57%		925

Source: The Department of Children and Families 2020 Annual Child Protective Investigation Survey Results, August 10, 2020. All numbers are rounded to the nearest tenth. Due to rounding of numbers, the total of the percentages may not equal 100%.

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 were “Fair Treatment from Supervisor and Manager,” “Pay Incentives (Base Pay and Overtime),” “Temporary Relief from Caseload Rotation,” and “Time Off with No Work Responsibilities”. The “Ability to Manage Work and Personal Life” scored the highest out of all measures. The average responses were consistent with last year’s survey results.

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	3	9	20	64	42	112	150	112	414	931	8
Two	Fair Treatment from Supervisor and Managers	0	2	0	5	16	12	35	76	97	686	929	9
Three	Base Pay	4	3	2	6	17	19	57	84	90	651	933	9
Four	Overtime Pay	16	5	2	8	48	29	54	85	83	600	930	9
Five	Discretionary Performance Bonus	19	8	7	11	48	41	71	94	81	545	925	9
Six	Job-Related Training	3	1	2	7	29	26	75	101	132	550	926	9
Seven	Immediate Supervisor Recognition for Work	16	14	21	22	109	93	125	140	102	284	926	8
Eight	Senior Management Recognition for Work	17	16	28	27	124	97	111	135	98	273	926	7
Nine	Time Off with No Work Responsibilities	2	4	4	3	17	21	25	52	103	697	928	9
Ten	Temporary Relief from Caseload Rotation	10	3	7	10	37	39	47	97	106	569	925	9
Eleven	Availability of Support	4	0	4	1	25	34	44	141	144	532	929	9
Twelve	Ability to Manage Work and Personal Life	2	0	0	2	8	11	25	51	90	731	920	10
Thirteen	Career Advancement Opportunities	12	3	6	6	29	29	68	83	107	583	926	9

Source: The Department of Children and Families 2020 Annual Child Protective Investigation Survey Results, August 10, 2020.



## Conclusion

The department's charge of meeting the desired outcomes and statutory requirements associated with the recruitment and retention of child protective investigations staff remains a challenge, but there has been significant progress made this past year under the leadership of Secretary Poppell.

The 2020 Legislative Session was a success in aiding with staff retention as well as recognition for and dedication to the work of child protective investigations staff considering the legislative raises that were afforded to Child Protective Investigators, Senior Child Protective Investigators, and Child Protective Investigator Supervisors. In addition, under the leadership of Secretary Poppell, a coordinated, enterprise approach to employee value and support has been initiated. The Office of Well-Being was established to address overall well-being amongst all department staff, with an additional goal to specifically address and prevent the impact of secondary traumatic stress and burnout amongst our CPI staff. The creation of the department's Quality Office is a monumental achievement to bring real time, life of case review and support to our frontlines. Within the Quality Office, a new training team is being developed to align more with quality outcomes and structured to promote a statewide approach to ensure the CPI workforce is receiving critical, targeted training with multi-layered development opportunities. These opportunities are in line with the Career Ladder Initiative to propel and support employee advancement, engagement, and retention.

In 2019, the CPI Efficiencies Workgroup was initiated by Secretary Poppell in order to examine strategies for creating efficiencies in the CPI workforce. Multiple recommendations projected greater than one million recoverable labor hours and an anticipated 10% regional turnover reduction. The actionable recommendations are still being implemented and the actual hours regained as a result of the CPI Efficiencies have not fully been realized, however initial feedback from the streamlined work project has resulted in 55 minutes per investigation time savings (per the self-report survey of initial rollout sites). In addition, a mobile application for CPIs to enter critical work from their mobile devices, including victim seen and case notes, was deployed in September 2020 and will be fully deployed to all CPI frontline staff by the end of December 2020. This application includes e-signature capabilities that will save our workforce time that will in turn be dedicated to families and children we serve. 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. CPI staff are our most valuable asset and best hope for keeping vulnerable children safe and achieving the best possible outcomes.

The department would like to extend its appreciation to Governor DeSantis, Senate President Galvano, and House Speaker Oliva for passing the pay raise for state employees. This increase helps demonstrate to our staff that the Governor and Legislature recognize and appreciate the difficult work that they do to help protect children throughout the state, and this recognition will no doubt support a reduction in turnover.