



**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

October 1, 2021

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Secretary

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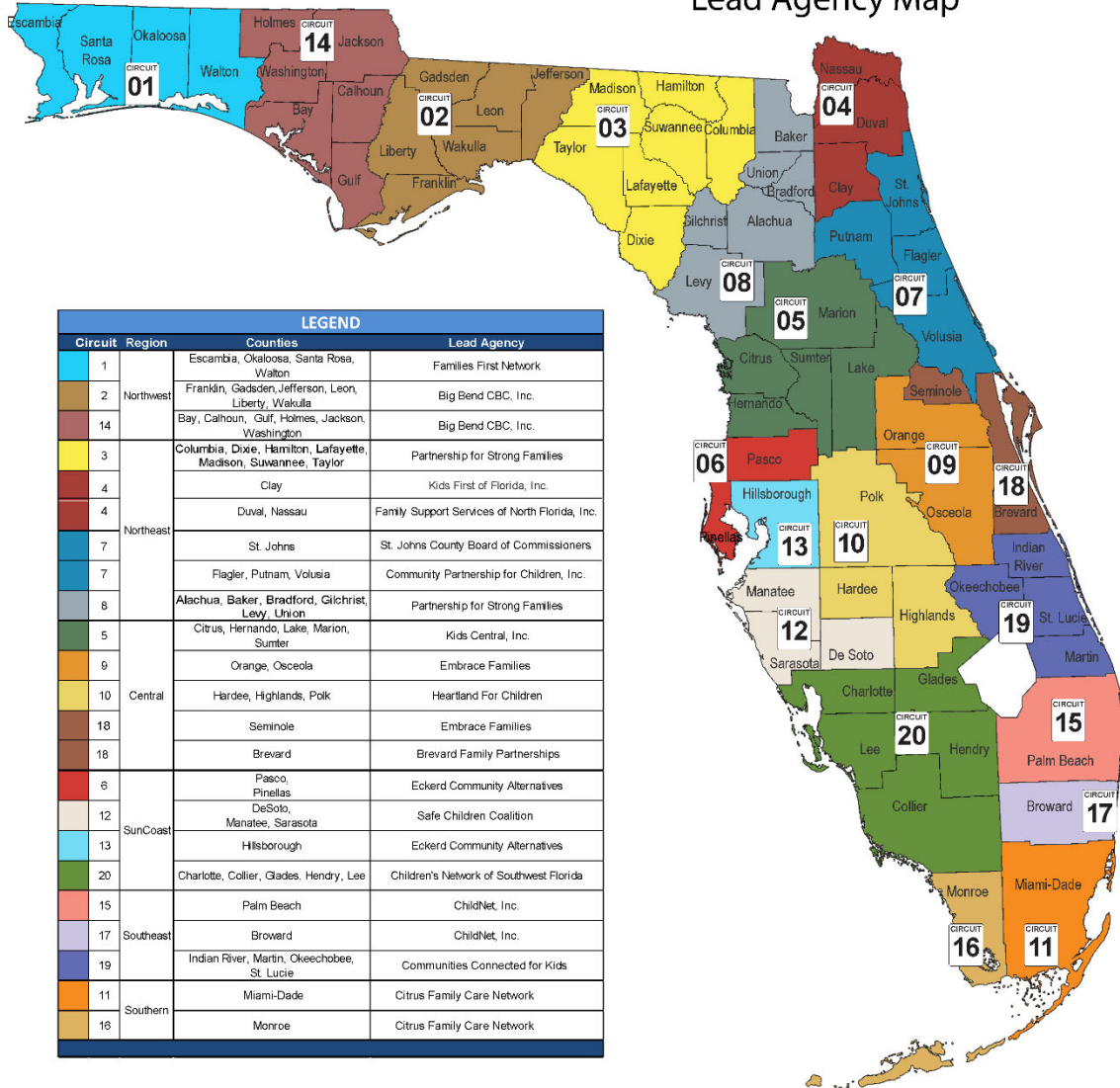
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DCF Regions, Circuits, and Community-Based Care Lead Agencies



Community-Based Care Lead Agency Map



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 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:

- 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;
- Child protective investigative staff minimum qualifications and base pay;
- 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;
- Professional advancement within the Child Protective Investigation classification; and
- Employee satisfaction, opinion, and concerns survey results.

General Statutory Requirements

Chapter 39, Florida Statutes, outlines Child Protective Investigator (CPI) responsibilities for all child-related reports accepted by the Florida Abuse Hotline (Hotline). First, Child Protective Investigators (CPIs) 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, CPIs 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, CPIs 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, CPIs 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 offices perform child protective investigations in the remaining seven counties (Broward, Hillsborough, Manatee, Pasco, Pinellas, Seminole, and Walton Counties) 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 offices is not a requirement of the grant, collaborative information sharing indicates that the sheriff offices are similarly challenged by high turnover for their 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 State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2020-21, the Legislature provided an increase in employee compensation for eligible child protective investigators. Effective July 1, 2020, CPIs and Senior CPIs received a 10 percent salary increase, and Child Protective Investigator Supervisors (CPIS) and Child Protective Field Support Consultants received a 5 percent increase to their base rate of pay. Approximately 1,648 employees in the CPI Classification received the 10 percent increase in July 2020. June 1, 2021, the Department implemented a soft launch of the Statewide Advertising and Recruitment Teams. One of the overall team goals is to improve the recruitment and selection process for the CPI critical classes by standardizing processes and using fair employment practices.

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 - \$49,200

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. As of June 24, 2021, there were 1,625 positions statewide within the child protective investigation job class, with 177 FTEs (approximately 11 percent) being vacant (see Table 1). There was a 7 percent increase in the total number of vacant positions this fiscal year. 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.

Region	Class Title	Position Allocation as of 6/24/2021	Total Vacant Positions as of 6/24/2021	Percentage of Positions Vacant as of 6/24/2021
Northwest	Child Protective Investigator	127	15	11.81%
	Senior Child Protective Investigator	42	3	7.14%
	Child Protective Investigator – Field Support Consultant	4	0	0.00%
	Child Protective Investigator Supervisor - SES	35	0	0.00%
Total		208	18	8.65%
Northeast	Child Protective Investigator	240	43	17.92%
	Senior Child Protective Investigator	55	7	12.73%
	Child Protective Investigator – Field Support Consultant	14	0	0.00%
	Child Protective Investigator Supervisor - SES	61	2	3.28%
Total		370	52	14.05%
Central	Child Protective Investigator	337	21	6.23%
	Senior Child Protective Investigator	79	4	5.06%
	Child Protective Investigator – Field Support Consultant	45	2	4.44%

Table 1 – Classification and Vacancies of the Department Child Protective Investigative Positions as of 6/24/2021				
Region	Class Title	Position Allocation as of 6/24/2021	Total Vacant Positions as of 6/24/2021	Percentage of Positions Vacant as of 6/24/2021
	Child Protective Investigator Supervisor - SES	83	1	1.20%
Total		544	28	5.15%
Suncoast	Child Protective Investigator	116	29	25.00%
	Senior Child Protective Investigator	23	2	8.70%
	Child Protective Investigator – Field Support Consultant	3	0	0.00%
	Child Protective Investigator Supervisor - SES	25	2	8.00%
Total		168	33	19.64%
Southeast	Child Protective Investigator	123	23	18.70%
	Senior Child Protective Investigator	26	2	7.69%
	Child Protective Investigator – Field Support Consultant	4	1	25.00%
	Child Protective Investigator Supervisor - SES	31	0	0.00%
Total		184	26	14.13%
Southern	Child Protective Investigator	89	18	20.22%
	Senior Child Protective Investigator	25	2	8.00%
	Child Protective Investigator – Field Support Consultant	10	0	0.00%
	Child Protective Investigator Supervisor - SES	28	0	0.00%
Total		152	20	13.16%
Statewide	Child Protective Investigator	1032	149	14.44%
	Senior Child Protective Investigator	250	20	8.00%
	Child Protective Investigator – Field Support Consultant	80	3	3.75%
	Child Protective Investigator Supervisor - SES	263	5	1.90%
Total		1,625	177	10.89%

Source: People First Data Warehouse Vacancy Report as of June 24, 2021. This report reflects the number of vacant positions within a region on the day the data was retrieved.

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 2021 Department of Children and Families Annual Child Protective Investigation Survey (Table 9, page 12) indicates that child protection staff identified “workload manageability” questions with ratings of “Agree” or “Neutral” at a higher consistency than other questions. The workload questions explored the ability of CPIs to maintain a proper work/life balance. The survey data reveals 39 percent of survey participants agree their job interferes with their personal life and the majority strongly agree they are emotionally exhausted from their job. 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 2020-21 the Department conducted 138,114 child protective investigations (sheriff offices investigations excluded). The trend in investigations conducted for the past 12 months reflect that the numbers for SFY 2020-21 show approximately a 3 percent increase in overall intakes accepted by the Hotline compared to the prior fiscal year. Five of the seven sheriff offices who conduct child protective investigations are in the Suncoast and Southeast Regions. Suncoast Region experienced a 25 percent increase in intakes and the Southeast Region experienced a 12 percent increase in intakes for fiscal year 2020-21. This increase excludes the sheriff offices investigations.

The global pandemic impacted the state of Florida beginning in early March 2020. This pandemic affected the number of calls to the Hotline in SFY 2019-20 as there was a decrease in the number of calls in comparison to prior years; call volume and caseloads began to return to pre-pandemic levels in SFY 2020-21.

Region	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19*	2019-20*	2020-21*
Northwest Region	16,745	17,998	19,178	19,413	19,068	17,460	15,191	18,047
Northeast Region	30,852	31,481	32,957	33,924	32,135	31,222	26,800	32,212
Central Region*	43,991	45,116	46,507	47,658	46,981	45,527	56,158	45,395
Suncoast Region*	13,589	13,650	14,286	15,367	14,311	14,016	12,730	15,926
Southeast Region*	15,835	15,786	15,908	16,719	15,797	15,349	13,285	14,940
Southern Region	13,983	13,841	13,844	14,474	13,478	12,631	10,522	11,594
Investigative Totals*	134,995	137,872	142,680	147,555	141,770	136,205	134,686	138,114

Source: Child Protective Investigation Trend Reports as of September 11, 2018 for SFY 2013-14 to SFY 2017-1; Child Welfare Dashboard for SFY 2018-19, 2019-20, and 2020-21.

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; foster care referrals which relates to the care provided to a child in an out-of-home placement or concerns pertaining to a child’s safety, permanency, or well-being; 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 June 2021 and illustrates the number of Special Condition Referrals by Type over a five-year period. There continues to be an increase and spikes of child-on-child referrals while all other special conditions types slightly decreased. The spikes in reports coincides with time periods children are in school. School officials diligently report incidents of inappropriate sexual activity amongst children. Furthermore, 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 18th birthday.

*Sheriff's Offices Excluded

Graph1

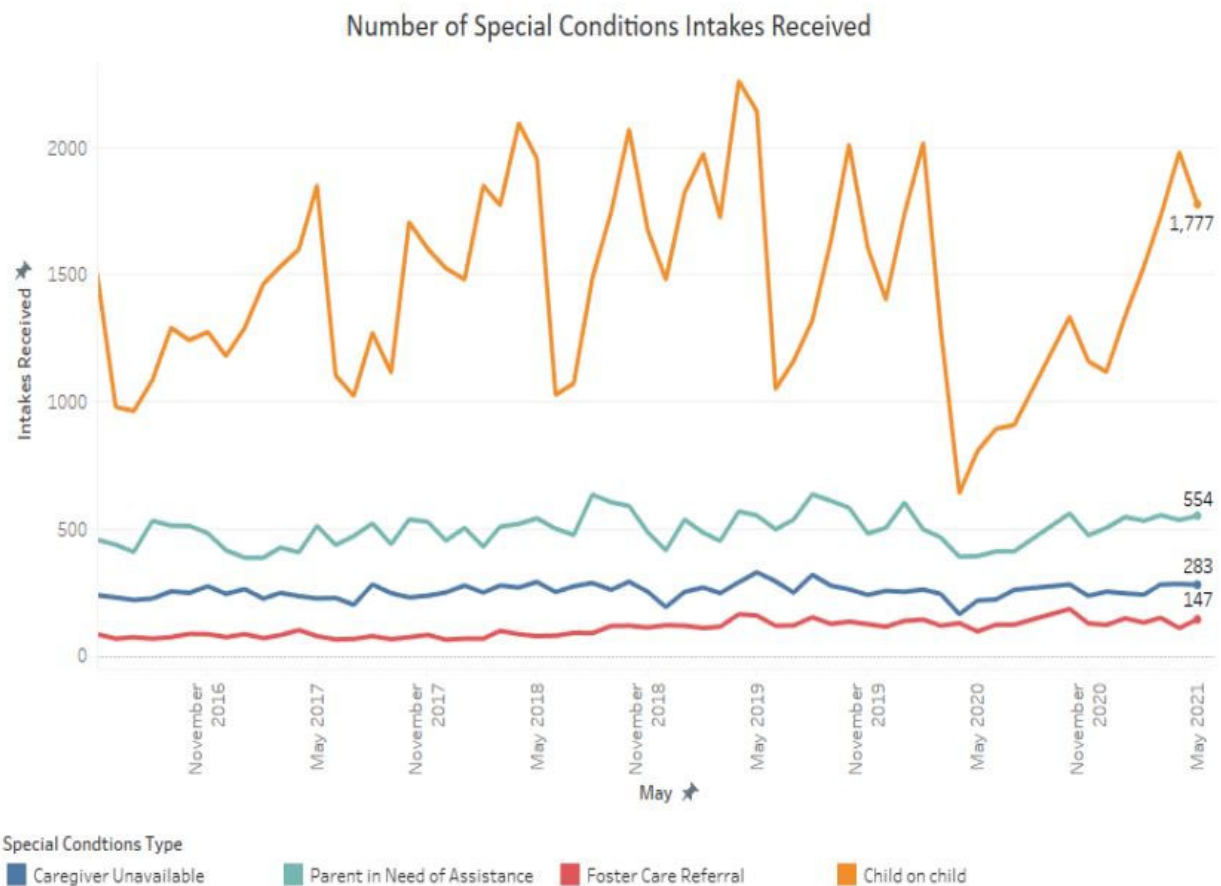


Table 3 provides the average monthly number of new investigations assigned to CPIs and Sr. CPIs by region for Department child abuse investigations based upon allocated and filled positions for SFY 2020-21. While other child protection professionals (e.g., Field Support Consultants and the respective 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 2020-21.

	Region	Total Investigations (Initial and Additional)	Allocated CPI / Sr. CPI Investigators as of 6/24/21	Average Monthly New Cases Per Allocated Position	Filled CPI / Sr. CPI Positions as of 6/24/21	Average Monthly New Cases Per Actual Filled Positions
SFY 2020-21	Northwest	18,047	169	9	151	10
	Northeast	32,212	295	9	245	11
	Central	45,395	416	9	391	10
	Suncoast	15,926	139	10	108	12
	Southeast	14,940	149	8	124	10
	Southern	11,594	114	8	94	10
	Statewide	138,114	1,282	9	1,113	10

Source: Child Welfare Dashboard as of July 15, 2021 and People First Data Warehouse Vacancy Report as of June 24, 2021.

The monthly average of new investigations per allocated CPI and Sr. CPI position statewide was nine for SYF 2020-21. 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 (10) based on filled, not allocated, positions as of June 24, 2021.

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. Newly hired CPIs undergoing pre-service training, reduced caseloads during the first few months following completion of pre-service training, 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. To illustrate this point, during SFY 2020-21, the average CPI workload was 13.039 cases with a high of 15.076 cases on May 31, 2021 and a low of 10.398 cases on July 31, 2020 (point-in-time counts each month).

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 Consultants 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 Consultants 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 approximately 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 2017-18			Position Allocation SFY 2018-19			Position Allocation SFY 2019-20			Position Allocation SFY 2020-21		
	Child Protective and Senior Child Protective Investigators	Child Investigator Supervisor - SES	Average Staffing Ratio	Child Protective and Senior Child Protective Investigators	Child Investigator Supervisor - SES	Average Staffing Ratio	Child Protective and Senior Child Protective Investigators	Child Investigator Supervisor - SES	Average Staffing Ratio	Child Protective and Senior Child Protective Investigators	Child Investigator Supervisor - SES	Average Staffing Ratio
Northwest	167	32	5.2	168	35	4.8	190	35	5.4	169	35	4.8
Northeast	296	51	5.8	300	61	4.9	308	61	5	295	61	4.8
Central	416	73	5.7	431	83	5.2	427	83	5.1	416	83	5
Suncoast	131	22	6	137	25	5.5	159	25	6.4	139	25	5.56
Southeast	140	28	5	151	31	4.9	170	31	5.5	149	31	4.8
Southern	125	25	5	123	28	4.4	125	28	4.5	114	28	4.1
Statewide	1,275	231	5.5	1,310	263	5.0	1,379	263	5.2	1,282	263	4.9

Source: State of Florida People First Data Warehouse as of June 30, 2018, June 24, 2019, July 20, 2020, and June 24, 2021.

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 fiscal years have averaged 34.80 percent and 36.28 percent, respectively. Turnover rates for only the CPI positions over the past two years have averaged 46.12 percent and 49.97 percent, respectively. The statewide turnover rate for supervisors over this same time-period averaged 10.81 percent and 8.56 percent, respectively. The statewide turnover rate for Field Support Consultants over the past two years have averaged 6.50 percent and 3.85 percent respectively. The turnover percentages for supervisors and Field Support Consultants decreased this fiscal year as turnover percentages for CPI positions continues to increase.

Table 5 – Turnover Rate of Department Child Protective Investigation Positions by Region and Class Title							
Region	Class Title	SYF 2019-20			SYF 2020-21		
		Ave # Emp	Separated	Rate	Ave # Emp	Separated	Rate
Northwest	Investigator	128.75	74	57.48%	129	70	54.26%
	Senior Investigator	39	2	5.13%	41	8	19.51%
	Field Support Consultant	4	0	0.00%	4	0	00.00%
	Supervisor	34.25	3	8.76%	34.5	5	14.49%
	Total	206	79	38.35%	208.5	83	35.32%
Northeast	Investigator	236.75	104	43.93%	223	135	60.54%
	Senior Investigator	49.5	9	18.18%	50.5	17	33.66%
	Field Support Consultant	13	1	7.69%	15	0	00.00%
	Supervisor	57.5	6	10.43%	60	7	11.67%
	Total	356.75	120	33.64%	348.5	159	45.62%

Region	Class Title	SYF 2019-20			SYF 20120-21		
		Ave # Emp	Separated	Rate	Ave # Emp	Separated	Rate
Central	Investigator	342.75	146	42.60%	341.5	125	36.60%
	Senior Investigator	75.25	11	14.62%	75.5	8	10.60%
	Field Support Consultant	29.5	1	3.39%	42.5	2	4.71%
	Supervisor	78.25	9	11.50%	81	3	3.70%
	Total	525.75	167	31.76%	540.5	138	25.53%
Suncoast	Investigator	112.5	61	54.22%	100	78	78.00%
	Senior Investigator	21.75	6	27.59%	19.5	7	35.90%
	Field Support Consultant	3.25	0	0.00%	3.5	1	28.57%
	Supervisor	22.75	3	13.19%	22.5	3	13.33%
	Total	160.25	70	43.68%	145.5	89	61.17%
Southeast	Investigator	126.75	53	41.81%	118	47	39.83%
	Senior Investigator	24.75	5	20.20%	25.5	2	7.84%
	Field Support Consultant	3.5	0	0.00%	3.5	0	0.00%
	Supervisor	30.25	4	13.22%	31	1	3.23%
	Total	185.25	62	33.47%	178	50	28.09%
Southern	Investigator	93.25	42	45.04%	83	42	50.60%
	Senior Investigator	21	7	33.33%	21.5	3	13.95%
	Field Support Consultant	8.25	2	24.24%	9.5	0	00.00%
	Supervisor	26.75	2	7.48%	28	3	10.71%
	Total	149.25	53	35.51%	142	48	33.80%
Statewide	Investigator	1040.75	480	46.12%	994.5	497	49.97%
	Senior Investigator	231.25	40	17.30%	233.5	45	19.27%
	Field Support Consultant	61.5	4	6.50%	78	3	3.85%
	Supervisor	249.75	27	10.81%	257	22	8.56%
	Total	1,583.25	551	34.80%	1,563	567	36.28%

Source: Florida Department of Children and Families, Critical Class Turnover Summary by Location SFY 2020-21 and SFY 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 the remaining 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. Data from the 2021 Department of Children and Families Annual Child Protective Investigations Survey (Table 6) provided the CPI classification an opportunity to rate the impact of how certain issues contribute to CPI turnover in their respective region. The number of cases or workload and the stress or emotional exhaustion displayed high impact statewide. Safety concerns had the lowest impact on CPI turnover statewide.

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.

Statement Number	Statement	High Impact	Medium Impact	Low Impact
Three	Stress/Emotional Exhaustion	91.37%	8.23%	0.40%
One	Number of Cases/Workload	86.55%	12.65%	0.80%
Two	Administrative Tasks/Activities	55.94%	32.39%	11.67%
Ten	Bureaucracy and Rigid Compliance Oriented Policies	52.92%	30.58%	16.50%
Nine	Lack of Support Network	43.46%	33.00%	23.54%
Eight	Feelings of Isolation and Powerlessness	39.72%	33.67%	26.61%
Six	Poor Organizational Culture and Climate	37.30%	35.08%	27.62%
Eleven	Lack of Autonomy	31.58%	44.94%	23.48%
Seven	Lack of Career Growth Opportunities	27.97%	35.81%	36.22%
Four	Safety Concerns	26.61%	38.31%	35.08%
Five	Inadequate Training/Development	25.05%	43.64%	31.31%

Source: The Department of Children and Families 2021 Annual Child Protective Investigation Survey Results, August 11, 2021.

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 2020-21, there were 173 promotional advancements, which is approximately 16 percent higher than the previous year. Of those 173 advancements, approximately 57 percent were CPIs promoting into other positions. Of those CPI promotions, 90 promoted to Sr. CPI positions, 5 promoted to a CPI Supervisor position, and 4 promoted to Child Protective Field Support Analyst/Consultant. Of the 173 total advancements, CPI Supervisor promotions accounted for 7 percent. Of the CPI Supervisor promotions, 5 promoted to Program Administrator, 4 promoted to Family Services Specialist, and 2 received lateral promotions to CPI Supervisor. The remaining 36 percent of promotions were either Field Support Consultants, Program Administrators, or Operations and Management Consultants promoting into other positions.

In November 2020 the Department proposed a Career Ladder ([report](#)) initiative to increase promotional opportunities for CPI class positions and provide additional opportunities for professional advancement. This initiative offers multiple pathways and advancement opportunities to include options for employees who are not seeking to promote into supervisory or management positions. The Department is finalizing training and position descriptions changes to implement the Career Ladder program.

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.

Educational Attainment of Employed Child Protective Investigative Staff

As of August 19, 2021, a People First data extract indicated there were 1,809 child protective investigative positions, including 184 Other Personnel Services (OPS); 1,438 were identified as having a baccalaureate degree; 174 were identified as having a master's degree; five were identified as having a doctorate degree; thirty-five were identified as educational data unavailable; and the remaining 157 were identified as high school graduates, having an associate's degree, or some years of college.

Of the 1,625 FTE child protective investigative staff listed in the People First data set, 176 held a degree in social work (includes baccalaureates and master's degrees). The total active child protective investigative staff currently holding a degree in social work is 9.73 percent. Table 7 provides a complete distribution of current educational backgrounds.

Degree Type	Northwest	Northeast	Central	Suncoast	Southeast	Southern	Statewide
Baccalaureate Degree Social Work	33 (16%)	29 (9%)	47 (8%)	3 (2%)	23 (13%)	12 (8%)	147 (9%)
Master's Degree in Social Work	7 (3%)	4 (1%)	12 (2%)	2 (1%)	2 (1%)	2 (1%)	29 (2%)
Baccalaureate Degree in Psychology, Sociology, Counseling, Special Education, Education, Human Development, Child Development, Family Development, Marriage and Family Therapy or Nursing	31 (15%)	80 (24%)	134 (24%)	33 (24%)	30 (17%)	26 (17%)	334 (21%)
Master's Degree in Psychology, Sociology, Counseling, Special Education, Education, Human Development, Child Development, Family Development, Marriage and Family Therapy or Nursing	1 (0.47%)	10 (3%)	4 (1%)	0 (0%)	2 (1%)	2 (1%)	19 (1%)
Baccalaureate Degree Other	123 (58%)	191 (56%)	325 (58%)	90 (66%)	113 (62%)	89 (58%)	931 (59%)
Master's Degree Other	16 (8%)	26 (8%)	37 (7%)	7 (5%)	11 (6%)	22 (14%)	119 (78%)
Degree Data Unavailable	1 (0.47%)	11 (3%)	20 (4%)	2 (1%)	0 (0%)	1 (1%)	35 (2%)
Baccalaureate Degree Total	187 (90%)	300 (89%)	506 (92%)	126 (93%)	166 (95%)	127 (84%)	1,412 (91%)
Master's Degree Total	24 (11%)	40 (12%)	53 (9%)	9 (7%)	15 (8%)	26 (17%)	167 (11%)
Doctorate Degree Total	1 (0.47%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.18%)	2 (1%)	0 (0%)	1 (1%)	5 (0.32%)
Total Child Investigative Positions Degree by Region as of 8/19/2021*	239 (13%)	393 (21%)	660 (35%)	151 (9%)	195 (11%)	171 (10%)	1,809 **

Source: State of Florida People First Data Warehouse as of August 19, 2021. * 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%

2021 Annual Child Protective Investigation Survey Results

The Department emailed a link to its Annual Child Protective Investigation Survey to a total of 1,489 Department CPIs, Sr. CPIs, CPI Field Support Consultants, 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 August 4-11, 2021. Survey questions included education and experience levels (time on the job by class position) as well as scaling inventories related to recognition and peer support, professional development, individual perception of accomplishments, safety and well-being, supervision and management, employee job cognizance, strategic alignment, turnover, and 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 34 percent participation or return rate (504 respondents). Of the 504 respondents, approximately 20 percent of CPIs responded they had less than one year on the job, approximately 25 percent had one to two years of experience, approximately 34 percent had three to four years' experience, and approximately 21 percent had five or more years' experience.

Additionally, 14 percent of CPI Supervisors noted they had less than one year on the job, approximately 22 percent had one to two years' experience, roughly 25 percent had three to four years' experience, and nearly 40 percent had five or more years' experience. Strategic alignment is the extent to which employees understand what the organization is attempting to accomplish and how the work they do contributes. Overall, Table 8 indicates approximately 69 percent of survey participants have a clear understanding of the agency's prevention and integration goals. Furthermore, 78 percent of participants understand how their role supports the Department's goals and mission.

Table 8- Child Protective Investigation Survey Results, Employee Strategic Alignment						
Child Protective Investigation Survey Results:						
"For the following, please rate each statement using one of the options on the scale shown."						
Question #	Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Three	I understand how my role supports the agency's goals and mission.	21.21%	57.17%	15.56%	4.04%	2.02%
One	I have a clear understanding of the agency's prevention and integration goals.	17.91%	50.70%	21.33%	7.65%	2.41%
Two	There is shared commitment among agency leadership, staff, community partners and stakeholders to improve the services that families need to help them thrive.	9.05%	38.83%	27.77%	17.10%	7.24%

Source: The Department of Children and Families 2021 Annual Child Protective Investigation Survey Results, August 11, 2021.

Table 9- Child Protective Investigation Survey Results: Workload						
"Please rate each statement below using one of the options on the scale shown."						
Statement #	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Five	I am emotionally exhausted from my job.	35.98%	29.42%	19.28%	12.13%	3.18%
Three	What the agency expects of me is unrealistic.	25.05%	35.98%	21.47%	12.72%	4.77%
Six	Rigid compliance oriented policies, top-down decision making, and lack of worker autonomy inhibits my ability to help families.	19.40%	26.00%	28.20%	22.60%	3.80%
Four	Our policies and administrative processes make it difficult to quickly and effectively assist my clients.	17.60%	25.20%	31.80%	22.60%	2.80%
One	I have a manageable caseload.	7.23%	29.32%	27.31%	23.90%	12.25%
Two	My job pressures do not interfere with my personal life.	6.40%	11.60%	10.60%	32.80%	38.60%

Source: The Department of Children and Families 2021 Annual Child Protective Investigation Survey Results, August 11, 2021.

Consistent with last year’s results, Table 10 highlights “Fair Treatment from Supervisors and Managers” as being “Extremely Important”. 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 area of “My job pressures do not interfere with my personal life.” Additionally, a majority of participants noted they were emotionally exhausted from their job as indicated by the highest combined “Strongly Agree/Agree” scoring. (Table 9, Questions 2 and 5).

Several key factors identified as the most important to personal satisfaction were “Fair Treatment from Supervisor and Manager,” “Base Pay,” “Overtime Pay,” “Discretionary Performance Bonus,” “Temporary Relief from Caseload Rotation,” “Availability of Support,” “Time Off with No Work Responsibilities,” and “Ability to Manage Work and Personal Life.” The average responses were consistent with last year’s survey results.

A significant number of CPIs, Sr. CPIs, Field Support Consultants, 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. This feedback loop will be utilized to inform recruitment and retention efforts and overall employee satisfaction. 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 10 – 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
Twelve	Ability to Manage Work and Personal Life	1	1	1	7	7	9	17	27	36	395	501	9
Two	Fair Treatment from Supervisor and Managers	1	2	0	4	6	14	27	54	44	350	502	9
Three	Base Pay	3	1	2	4	12	18	34	39	47	343	503	9
Nine	Time Off with No Work Responsibilities	14	2	5	7	16	16	37	33	47	325	502	9
Four	Overtime Pay	12	4	5	7	32	18	24	38	38	323	501	9
Five	Discretionary Performance Bonus	11	4	5	7	32	18	24	38	38	323	500	9
Ten	Temporary Relief from Caseload Rotation	16	1	3	11	30	20	41	34	45	299	500	9
Eleven	Availability of Support	6	1	5	3	18	20	44	47	71	283	498	9
Thirteen	Career Advancement Opportunities	5	3	2	11	27	34	51	87	50	230	500	8
One	Immediate Supervisor Feedback	7	4	7	11	47	26	64	68	48	221	503	8
Six	Job-Related Training	4	2	8	5	44	37	55	63	67	216	501	8

Question #	Question	1 Not Important at All	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 Extremely Important	Total Responses	Average Response
Seven	Immediate Supervisor Recognition for Work	16	16	7	23	71	57	73	61	47	131	502	7
Eight	Senior Management Recognition for Work	20	20	11	31	67	52	77	58	39	126	501	7
Fourteen	Professional Peer Recognition	24	9	22	36	82	76	56	41	45	108	499	7

Source: The Department of Children and Families 2021 Annual Child Protective Investigation Survey Results, August 11, 2021.

Department Efforts to Address Staff Stability

A skilled, stable workforce is fundamental to success of the state’s child protection efforts and remains a key focus of the Department. In addition to implementing a Career Ladder model, the Department has taken several steps to support workforce growth and stability.

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. This newly created office continues to activate an organizational shift towards prioritizing self-care and personal wellness.

The Department’s fully implemented Quality Office plays a pivotal role in identifying initiatives to correct programmatic and systemic deficiencies. This team is focused on driving continuous quality improvement across the enterprise, with a strong initial focus on child welfare. To do this, the Quality Office is organized into three teams, quality reviews, advanced data analytics and performance improvement, and education and training. The child welfare quality review unit conducts reviews of child welfare cases in real time to increase insight into the quality of work performed by child protective investigations staff. Analyses are performed with information collected from these reviews and other data to inform performance improvement needs. The training team works to align with quality outcomes, help drive programmatic integration, and support a statewide approach to ensure the CPI workforce is receiving critical, targeted training with multi-layered development opportunities.

The Department’s Human Resources office has created dedicated recruitment teams in each region, facility, and specific headquarters’ offices, as well as a statewide advertising team, to align recruitment and selection functions through the use of existing positions to improve the hiring process for critical class positions (Abuse Counselors, Adult Protective Investigators, Child Protective Investigators, Economic Self-Sufficiency Specialist I’s, and Facilities’ Direct Care – Human Services Worker Is, IIs and UTRs). This structure ensures a standardized statewide recruitment and selection approach through the use of documented processes, to include templates and tools utilized, that incorporate best practices. It is anticipated that meaningful impact will be gained via hiring improvement efficiencies that will positively affect recruitment efforts with the potential to lead to increased retention and allow the focus of supervisors to be directed to their direct reports and the clients being served.

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 for a critical asset for the role they play in keeping vulnerable children safe and achieving the best possible outcomes.