



NC Department of Health and Human Services

Child Welfare Workload Study

Peter West
Section Chief for County Operations

June 12, 2024

Two Separate Data Collections

1) Random Moment Time Study

To determine how staff spend their time

2) Time Study

To determine how much time is needed to handle cases in accordance with policy

Random Moment Time Study

- 1) A total of 4210 random moments were selected in proportion to staff type and county size using lists provided by DSS. The sample was collected from June 12 to July 28, 2023.

Staff Type Name	Total Moments	Completed Moments	Response Rate
Caseworker	2,132	1,153	54%
Supervisor	2,078	1,495	72%
Total	4,210	2,648	63%

Hours Available for Case Work

	Caseworkers	Supervisors
% of Time Available for Casework	65.1%	47.0%
Avg workdays/month	20.8	20.8
Scheduled Hours/day	8.0	8.0
Hours available Overall/month	166.4	166.4
Hours available for Casework/month	108.3	78.3

Percent of Time Spent on Categories of tasks, Statewide

Category	Caseworkers	Supervisors
Case Specific	65.1%	47.0%
Administrative	17.7%	36.5%
Training	4.3%	4.2%
Non-work	12.9%	12.2%

Percent of Time Spent on Categories of tasks statewide

Category	NC DSS
Case Specific	65.1%
General Administration	17.7%
Training	4.3%
Non-Work	12.9%
Total	100%

Time Study

Two Case Types

1) Event Case – Intake, Assessments, Initial Licensing

2) Status Case - Ongoing

Case Types and Numbers

Case Type Number	Case Type	Number of Cases with at Least 1 Minute of Time Reported
10	CPS Intake and Assessment Approach	237
11	Family Assessment	194
12	Investigative Assessment	116
20	Family In-Home Services/In-Home Services	71
21	Licensed Family Foster Care	86
22	Unlicensed Family Care Home	11
23	Therapeutic Foster Care	77
24	Licensed Relative/Fictive Kin	63
25	Unlicensed Relative/Fictive Kin	93
26	Trial Home Placement	47
27	Parent/Legal Guardian	27
28	Hospitalization	52
29	Runaway	30
30	Residential Facility (includes Juvenile Detention or Incarceration)	59
31	Treatment Facility	71
32	Other	52
33	Adoption	95
34	Extended Foster Care/Independent Living	86
50	Foster Home Licensing Application	80
51	Kinship Home Licensing Application	32
52	Licensed Foster Home Maintenance	76
Total Cases Reported		1,655

Task Group	Caseworkers	Supervisors
<i>Case-Specific Subtotal</i>	65.0%	47.9%
Intake Activities	2.5%	2.1%
Review, Screening, and File Review/CPS Agency History	2.4%	2.1%
Contacts	11.4%	3.6%
Safety Decision/Safety Planning/Assessment Findings	1.2%	1.6%
Assessment Tools and Activities	3.6%	0.7%
Service Plans	0.7%	0.3%
Team Meetings	4.0%	4.0%
Case Consultation and Case Reviews	3.3%	5.2%
Service Referral, Coordination or Provision	3.6%	2.1%
Travel	4.0%	0.6%
Transportation of Client	2.3%	0.1%
Arranging Visitation	1.7%	0.6%
Case Documentation	14.8%	2.1%
Eligibility Determinations	0.2%	0.6%
Prepare for Court Hearings	2.8%	2.2%
Participate in Court Hearings	1.5%	1.5%
Social Work Supervisory Tasks	2.9%	17.3%
Adoption/Guardianship Processing	0.7%	0.1%
Licensing and Monitoring	1.6%	0.4%
<i>Non-Case-Specific Subtotal</i>	35.0%	
General Administration	7.7%	10.3%
Community Outreach	1.2%	0.5%
Travel (non-case specific)	2.1%	0.9%
Clerical, Reception, Telephones	1.9%	0.5%
Supervisory Tasks (non-case specific)	4.0%	23.5%
Federal and State Reviews and Communication	0.5%	0.8%
Special Studies	0.3%	0.1%
Training and Staff Development	4.3%	4.2%
Non-work Activities	12.9%	12.2%
Total	100.0%	100.0%

Summary of Hours Needed By Case Type

Case Type Category	Calculated Hours per Month
CPS Intake and Assessment Approach	2.2
Assessments	16.8
Family In-home Services/ In-home Services	16.2
Foster Care	14.2
Licensing	15.3
Licensed Foster Home Maintenance	5.0

Percent of Time Spent on Categories of tasks, Statewide, Comparison

Category	NC DSS	State A	State B	State C
Contact	11.4%	16.7%	23.9%	15.8%
Case Documentation	14.8%	10.5%	6.7%	13.6%

Workload Sizes

The table that follows displays the average number of cases a caseworker could carry monthly if they carried only one type of case. Here, the results of the workload study are used to measure the average number of cases a caseworker can manage at any one time, doing so on a statewide basis and by county size. The more time caseworkers have available for work, the more cases they can manage.

Workload Sizes

Case Types	Hours Needed to work a case	The number of cases a worker could work in a month
CPS Intake and Assessment Approach	2.2	49.2
Assessments	16.8	6.4
Family In-home Services/ In-home Services	16.2	6.7
Foster Care	14.2	7.6
Licensing*	15.3	7.1
Licensed Foster Home Maintenance	5.0	21.7

Recommendations

Increase the percentage of time caseworkers have available to be in contact with children and families by:

- 1) Addressing transportation
- 2) Replacing paper-based day sheets with an electronic Random Moment Time
- 3) Leveraging technology to improve case documentation practices and improve overall efficiency.

Recommendations

Enhance supports and resources for staff to address worker wellbeing by:

- 1) Conducting a pay study or market wage analysis
- 2) Continue investing in and leveraging technology resource
- 3) Support the implementation of a robust wellbeing and psychological safety supportive services for state and county staff.

Recommendations

Expand the Child Welfare Education Collaborative to develop a formalized apprenticeship program, such as a Registered Apprenticeship Program, to build a sustainable workforce pipeline.

Recommendations

Align child welfare caseloads with workloads to estimate the number of full-time equivalents (FTEs) needed to manage DSS' caseload volume.



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CFSR Round 4 Update

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CFSR Review Reminder

- **REMINDER:**

- State-Led review of a statewide random sample of 65 cases (40 FC and 25 IH)
- Review is being conducted by NC DSS CFSR Quality Assurance Staff.
- CFSR Case review period is April 1, 2024-September 30, 2024
- Counties identified for July 2024, Notification letters went out on May 15, 2024
- 21 Cases reviewed to date

CFSR Review Update – 21 Cases (April, May)

Performance Item or Outcome		January -March 2024	April - May 2024
		SA	SA
Safety Outcome 1	Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect.	57.14%	33.33%
Safety Outcome 2	Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate.	53.13%	42.86%
Permanency Outcome 1	Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.	10%	7.69%
Permanency Outcome 2	The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children.	75%	61.54%
Well-Being Outcome 1	Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.	34.38%	28.57%
Well-Being Outcome 2	Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs.	75%	87.5%
Well-Being Outcome 3	Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.	44.83%	50%