

Oregon DHS|OHA - Office of Forecasting, Research and Analysis

CASELOAD FORECAST STEERING COMMITTEE CHARTER

Background

The Office of Forecasting, Research and Analysis (OFRA) provides objective, transparent, and independent caseload forecasts for the Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Oregon Health Authority (OHA). After HB 2009 created the twin agencies of DHS and OHA, OFRA was designated as a shared service supporting both agencies. As a shared services unit within DHS|OHA, OFRA's full responsibilities are documented in a Service Level Agreement posted on the DHS|OHA intranet.

OFRA develops caseload forecasts for all major DHS|OHA entitlement programs. Since every program area has unique issues, OFRA has eight Caseload Forecast Steering Committees:

OHA

- Medical Assistance Programs (MAP)
- Healthy KidsConnect (HKC)
- Addictions and Mental Health (AMH) – Mandated caseload

DHS

- Aging and People with Disabilities (APD)
- Child Welfare (CW)
- Developmental Disabilities (DD)
- Self-Sufficiency (SS)
- Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)

Purpose

Each major caseload area has a separate Caseload Forecast Steering Committee which provides critical program information and serves to review and advise on the forecast developed by OFRA.

The committee structure ensures the following objectives are met:

- a) The forecast development, review and approval process is objective, transparent, and independent.
- b) Forecasters are informed of currently enacted policy, program, and process changes (numerical and narrative) that have the potential to affect caseload count and forecasts.
- c) Forecasters are informed of program-level information (numerical and narrative) that affects the caseload context.
- d) Program, policy, budget and management experts review the caseload forecasts.
- e) Program, policy, budget and management experts review semiannual forecast parameters, and recommend adjustments, risks, and alternative approaches.
- f) The steering committees recommend and review other information relevant to the caseload forecasting processes such as program information, maintenance of program data, stakeholder input, exogenous data sources, etc.

Authority

The Caseload Forecast Steering Committees are chartered and sponsored by the DHS|OHA Joint Operations and Policy Steering Committees (JOSC and JPSC) to work with OFRA to make caseload forecast decisions and/or recommendations.

Membership

Each Caseload Forecast Steering Committee will include:

- a) Subject matter experts - representatives from the program areas including design, delivery, and analysis appointed by the program director of the applicable caseload area.
- b) Representatives from finance, including the budget administrator and budget analysts appointed by the budget administrator.
- c) Representatives from the Legislative Fiscal Office and the Department of Administrative Services Budget and Management staff who are assigned to monitor the program area.
- d) Representatives from OFRA, including the unit administrator and lead forecaster for the program area. Analysts and technical staff from OFRA may also attend.
- e) Committees may include other DHS|OHA staff with an interest in the program area (e.g. workload planning).

Roles

Each Caseload Forecast Steering Committee shall:

- Review the forecast materials prepared by OFRA staff.
- Discuss the pertinent internal and external factors impacting caseloads.
- Advise OFRA about program areas being forecast, as well as new areas requiring a forecast.
- Provide expert information relevant to the forecasting process.
- Make recommendations to OFRA about the official semiannual caseload forecast.

Scope

The scope of the Caseload Forecast Steering Committees:

- Includes production of the semiannual caseload forecast for the respective program area.
- Excludes production of original legislation, original fiscal data, creating or leading program/policy evaluation.

Principles

The following principles guide the Caseload Forecast Steering Committees:

- The caseload forecasting process is objective, transparent, & independent of political influence.
- Decisions are supported by data.
- Active participation and candid discussion is expected from all committee members.
- Commitment to work together across agencies, divisions, and programs.
- Commitment to engage with DHS and OHA partners for improved performance.
- Innovation and continuous improvement principles/tools are applied in the forecasting process.
- Service excellence and accountability is a standard for performance.

Relationship with Other Bodies

The Caseload Forecast Steering Committees routinely interact with several other DHS|OHA governance bodies. Routine interactions include:

- DHS|OHA Budget Administration - These units use the results of the final caseload forecast to develop and manage the agency budgets.
- DHS|OHA Cabinets - The DHS|OHA Cabinets are responsible for overall governance of both agencies and routinely request information from the forecast steering committees, and use the results of the final caseload forecast for program development, delivery and analysis.
- Joint Operations Steering Committee (JOSC) - The JOSC reviews and approves the OFRA service level agreement and this Charter.

Responsibilities of Members

Expectations of committee members, particularly Subject Matter Experts:

Active participation by program staff is essential to the steering committee process.

- a) Advise OFRA about program areas being forecast, as well as new areas requiring a forecast.
- b) Maintain an objective perspective on the forecast process in order to ensure integrity and objectivity of the forecast.
- c) Assess forecast assumptions for their policy relevance and reasonableness.
- d) Identify policy, program and environmental factors that are likely to impact the caseload.
- e) Inform OFRA of currently enacted policy, program, and process changes that have the potential to affect caseload count.
- f) Provide program-level information (numerical and narrative) that informs OFRA forecasters and staff of caseload context.
- g) Provide expert review of forecast parameters, including recommended adjustments, risks, and alternative approaches.
- h) Provide other expert information relevant to maintenance, program information, and exogenous data sources.

- i) Attend steering committee meetings or send a knowledgeable representative empowered to exercise the authority of the member.
- j) Inform the assigned OFRA forecaster about staffing and/or organizational changes that might affect membership of the forecast steering committee.
- k) Participate in candid discussion about the forecast and programs, including asking and answering probing questions from other committee members.
- l) Communicate with forecasting on a regular basis outside of steering committee meetings to ensure forecasting understands what is happening in their program areas.
- m) Provide feedback on OFRA's work product, processes, and performance.
- n) Provide resources within their authority to develop recommendations under the scope of this Charter.

Expectations of OFRA:

- a) Produce and distribute a forecast schedule in calendar form, sharing updates as necessary.
- b) Analyze and integrate internal and external factors impacting caseloads.
- c) Verify/evaluate empirical evidence used to support assumptions.
- d) Develop and maintain the Integrated Client Services Data Warehouse (ICS).
- e) Develop mathematical models used to complete base, adjusted and risk forecasts.
- f) Meet with the Forecast Steering Committee at least once each cycle to discuss the forecast and to obtain, discuss, and consider input of committee members.
- g) Provide committee members with the base forecast, including month-to-month projected caseload for current and subsequent biennia.
- h) Provide committee members with adjusted forecasts including month-to-month projected caseload for current and subsequent biennia.
- i) Provide backup materials and document explanations, assumptions, risks, etc.
- j) Provide documentation about the forecast methodologies used.
- k) Produce and distribute the official caseload publication describing the programs, general assumptions and risks, data tables, graphs and charts.
- l) Produce a regional caseload forecast by county and DHS|OHA service district.
- m) Produce monthly caseload reports – monitoring actual client counts compared to the forecast.
- n) Engage stakeholders for input, quality review, and feedback.

Recommendations

Each Caseload Forecast Steering Committee shall make recommendations to OFRA about the official semiannual caseload forecast. Prior to reaching a final recommendation on the caseload forecast, the committee shall discuss the pertinent internal and external factors impacting caseloads.

OFRA will use the final forecast discussed at the semi-annual caseload steering committee meetings as the official forecast. Occasionally additional adjustments may need to be considered after the final committee meeting. When that occurs, the forecaster will notify all steering committee members about the proposed change, providing an explanation and giving committee members a chance to comment. This communication may be in-person, by phone, or via email. Following that exchange, the forecaster will communicate the final decision to all steering committee members.

Meetings

The Caseload Forecast Steering Committees will meet periodically throughout the year:

- Twice each year to prepare the official Spring and Fall caseload forecasts – each steering committee will normally have two meetings each forecast cycle in order to review information and discuss the forecast. Occasionally, additional meetings may be needed to resolve specific issues or questions.
- Twice each year (once between each forecast cycle) to review caseload trends, policy and program changes that may impact the caseload, miscellaneous projects that inform the forecast, administrative matters, process improvement ideas, etc.
- Subcommittees and temporary workgroups may meet as needed.
- Members of the steering committees may exchange electronic communication as needed.
- Additional meetings may be held throughout the year at the request of the Oregon Legislature or DHS|OHA executives.

Meeting Support

The Office of Forecasting, Research and Analysis will:

- Schedule meetings and facilities.
- Provide equipment for the meetings, including electronics.
- Prepare and distribute a meeting agenda in advance of meetings.
- Provide committee members with materials for review via email or hard copy. Committee members may be asked to print their own materials from electronic copies distributed prior to meetings.
- Maintain records that track materials, decisions and action items of the forecast committees.

Changes to the Charter

Changes may be made to the Charter based on recommendations from OFRA, the committees, or JOSOC. OFRA staff shall review this charter with the forecast steering committees at least biennially, and if warranted, update this charter.

Original approval by JOSOC: 03/29/12

Latest revision: --/--/---