

# Oregon Department of Human Services

## Child Welfare Progress Report



## This month in Child Welfare

Oregon Child Welfare is working to create a system where families can be served holistically to address safety and stability concerns so they can stay together. In situations where children cannot remain safely in their homes, we want to provide a safe, stable and caring foster care setting with wrap-around community supports that match each child's unique needs.

The Child Welfare program is moving Oregon toward this objective working with the Governor's contracted consulting team, Alvarez & Marsal (A&M), and with the support of many state and local partners. In addition to the work mentioned in this report, Child Welfare priorities in September include:

- Recruiting a Child Welfare Director to lead us through our next phase of system reform. We are working with Casey Family Programs to recruit candidates from a small, national pool of experienced child system leaders and measuring against the attributes we need in a leader.
- Creating a Comprehensive Project Portfolio and establishing a Project Management Office to enable clear prioritization, effective implementation and close monitoring of projects from initial concept to conclusion.
- Working with Chapin Hall from the University of Chicago to deepen our understanding of the Family First Prevention Services Act of 2018 and create the required five-year plan for its implementation by November. The Act aims to prevent children from entering foster care and reduce placement of children in congregate care settings.

It takes all of us working together to keep children safe. We appreciate the collaboration and support, and look forward to creating an Oregon where all families thrive.

Kind regards,  
Jana Mclellan, Interim Director of Child Welfare

### Our vision

Our vision is for every child and family to have a safe and positive environment in which to live and develop.

### Fostering success: Riley's story

Four years after Annie entered foster care, the 12-year-old went to live with Salem foster parents Holly and Josh Hawes as a short-term placement. Annie had been in several foster homes and had one failed adoption. She asked the Hawes every day if they were going to adopt her.

A year later, the Hawes adopted Annie. Annie changed her name to reflect her new life. She chose the name Riley, which means brave.

Holly describes Riley as "really creative, compassionate, likes to try new things, a great artist, likes music, loves going on long drives and spending time with friends. She is active in her church youth group, plays the ukulele and video games, and is an excellent landscape photographer."

Now 17, Riley graduated from high school. She's going to Linn-Benton Community College to study to be an ultrasound technician. She credits being in foster care for where she is now: "If I had stayed where I was, I wouldn't be in such a great place."



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# About the Oregon Child Welfare Progress Report

In March 2018, Gov. Kate Brown requested a monthly progress report on Child Welfare. In April 2019, the Governor issued Executive Order No. 19-03 (<https://go.usa.gov/xVnH6>) which created a Child Welfare Oversight Board to assist her in making and implementing recommendations to improve Oregon's system for supporting safe children and thriving families. The report is published monthly and has been revised to share progress in specific areas connected to the directives from the Governor and the Board.

For more information, contact the Child Welfare Director's Office at [ChildWelfare.DirectorsOffice@state.or.us](mailto:ChildWelfare.DirectorsOffice@state.or.us) or (503) 945-6953.

Past Oregon Child Welfare Progress Reports are posted at [www.oregon.gov/dhs](http://www.oregon.gov/dhs).

See the annual Child Welfare Data Books (<https://go.usa.gov/xVnHU>).

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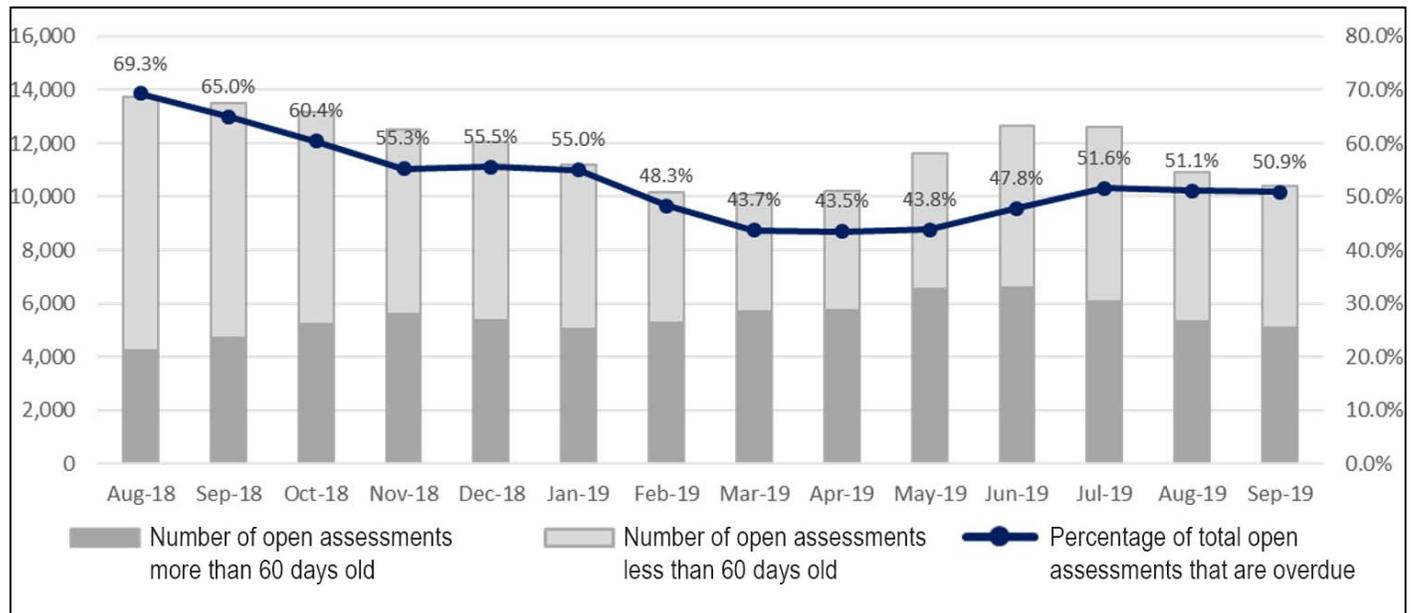
# Child Safety

Child Welfare receives reports of potential child abuse, assesses the situations and prepares safety plans to assist children and families, working closely with law enforcement and other community partners. In some cases, a safety plan is put in place, which enables a child to stay at home with the family. When child safety can't be ensured in the home, an out-of-home safety plan is developed where DHS considers relative placement as its first option, followed by foster care.

## Data

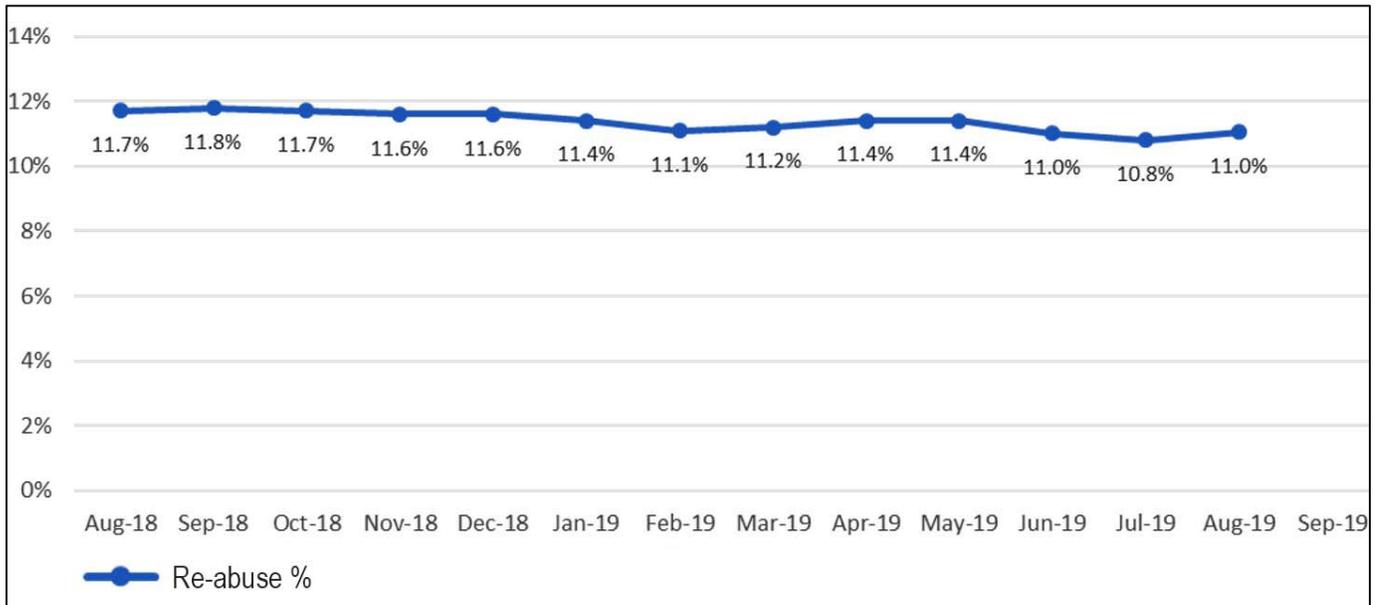
### Overdue assessments

Child Protective Services (CPS) assessments describe our response to a report of child abuse and if needed, the level of intervention necessary for children to be safe. With the high caseloads workers carry, situations with present or impending danger take priority, resulting in a backlog of overdue assessments. Child Welfare is implementing two plans simultaneously: One to reduce the backlog of overdue assessments and a second sustainability plan for achieving timely completion of new assessments.



## Re-abuse rates

Maltreatment includes the different types of physical or emotional ill treatment that can result in actual or potential harm to a child. Each type of maltreatment experienced by a victim in a founded child abuse referral counts as an incident of child abuse or neglect. Victims may have suffered more than one type of maltreatment or may have been involved in more than one founded referral. Re-abuse rates are defined federally to reflect the recurrence of maltreatment. This chart reflects the percentage of children who were victims of another substantiated or indicated maltreatment allegation within 12 months of their initial report.

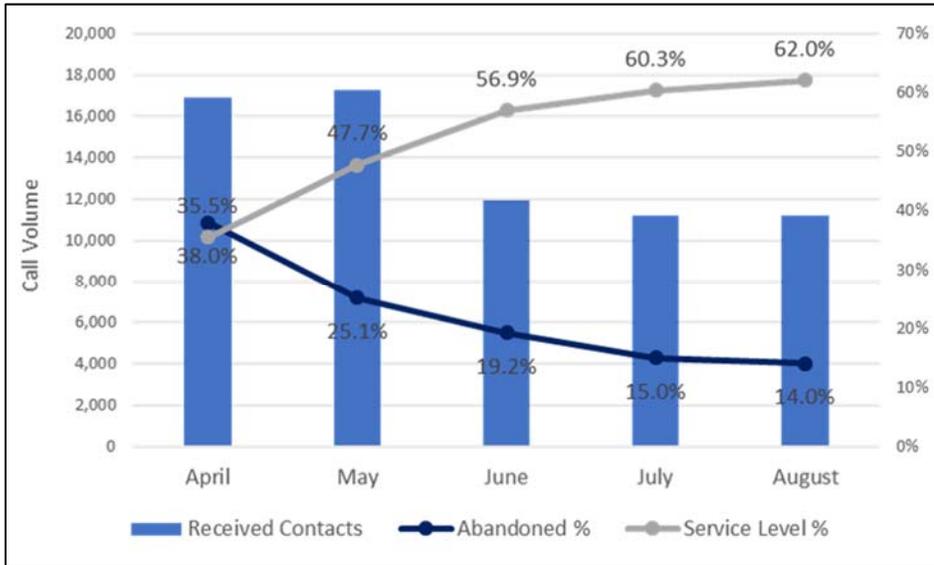


## Oregon Child Abuse Hotline (ORCAH)

By streamlining the Oregon Child Abuse Hotline screening processes and consolidating 15 regional hotlines into one, Child Protective Services (CPS) workers are better able to meet the complex needs of the diverse communities that make up our state. As part of this streamlining plan, all screening staff are being trained in the same interpretation of rule and Child Welfare policies and procedures. This ensures that all children and families are served and evaluated in a consistent way and treated fairly within the system.

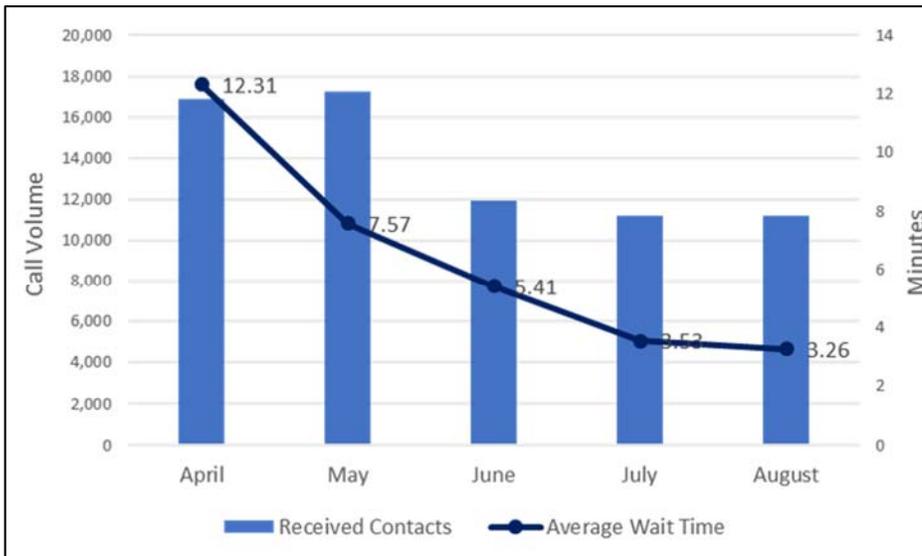
## ORCAH service level

Service level measures the percentage of calls that were answered within a certain timeframe. ORCAH is working toward a service level timeframe goal of two minutes. In this chart, the service level timeframe is 3 minutes for April, May, June and July 1-16, 2019. It was 2 minutes from July 17, 2019 through August 2019.



## ORCAH average wait times

Average wait time measures the wait times for all categories of callers. ORCAH is working toward a goal of answering all calls within two minutes. ORCAH continues hiring and training screeners which will assist in reducing wait times.



A statewide intermittent phone network outage during the first three days of August was a factor impacting maximum wait times for all types of callers. Maximum wait times during the network outage were: Law Enforcement (LEA), 69.45 minutes; Mandatory Reporter (MR), 197.92; General Public (GP), 79.27, and Spanish (SP), 26.65. With the first three days excluded, August maximum wait times were: LEA, 12.37 minutes; MR, 45.33; GP, 35.5, and SP, 25.42.

# Child Safety

## August accomplishments

- Over the past year, 15 regional child abuse reporting hotlines were centralized into a single hotline to improve safety, consistency and customer service. During August, ORCAH examined available call volume data from last school year and transitioned the majority of screener schedules to better match anticipated call volume increases once the school year began. It also developed quality assurance tools and performance management scorecards. Child abuse reporting guides were updated.
- Critical Incident Review Teams (CIRT) are formed when there is a fatality of a child known to DHS. CIRTs identify when systemic issues may present barriers to adequate Child Welfare service delivery or child safety decision making. SB 832 passed in 2019 brings substantial changes to CIRTs. DHS revised administrative rules to incorporate the bill requirements and adjusted website content at [www.oregon.gov/dhs](http://www.oregon.gov/dhs).

## September priorities

- ORCAH will complete hiring for remaining screening positions and develop statewide mandatory reporter “train the trainer” curriculum. This effort is expected to help reduce maximum wait times. ORCAH quarterly and annual reports will be developed.
- Branches and districts continue to set goals and targets for completing overdue assessments. Crook, Tillamook, and Wallowa Counties have zero overdue assessments. Alvarez & Marsal assisted in the development of a Child Protective Services data dashboard that will be reviewed for final approval this month. It will provide real time data that captures not only overdue assessments but also branch assignment numbers. The production of the dashboard will be transferred to the DHS data and research team by the end of October.
- All SB 832 statute amendments for CIRTs will be implemented by October 1, 2019 and a new CIRT Timeline Matrix will be posted to the website. The team will build on increased tracking and reporting capabilities on child fatalities to develop trend reports to determine systematic factors in child fatalities.

## August highlight

Child Welfare is working with local office staff, SEIU and Casey Family Programs to reduce overdue Child Protective Services (CPS) assessments by 5 percent a month in each branch.

Assessments describe our response to reports of potential child abuse. Assessments are supposed to be complete in 60 days but factors such as high caseloads and high staff turnover caused a backlog to develop.

In mid-July 2019, Child Welfare launched a two-pronged effort to reduce its overdue assessments by 5 percent each month and complete new assessments within the 60-day timeline.

In the first 30 days, overdue assessments dropped by 16 percent statewide. In the second 30-day period, there was an additional 9.6 percent reduction statewide. There were 5,187 remaining overdue assessments at the start of September.

Our mission is to keep children safe and keep families together whenever possible. The shrinking number of overdue assessments means we can evaluate safety threats in a timely manner and reduce safety risks in families. Our goal is to create a stronger culture of support, transparency and timeliness for this critical work that keeps children safe.



# Foster Care

Foster Care efforts are focused in three primary categories: Safely reducing the number of children who enter the foster care system; safely reducing the length of stay in the foster care system and increasing foster system capacity to match the unique needs of every child with a safe, stable and caring foster home in their community.

## Data

### DHS certified providers

Having more foster homes available will help ensure a proper first-time placement for each child. The chart displays DHS certified providers by type and certification duration<sup>1</sup> on July 30, 2019.

Certification duration	Child specific	General	Statewide
Certificate of Approval: <i>A document DHS issues to a certified family to approve the operation of a home to provide care for a child or young adult in the care or custody of DHS and for whom DHS determines a placement is needed.</i>	1,799	1,537	3,335
Extended Temporary: <i>Temporary Certificate of Approval authorized for an extension beyond 180 days.</i>	87		87
Temporary Certificate of Approval: <i>A document DHS issues to a certified family to approve the operation of a home to provide care for a specific child or young adult in the care and custody of DHS. The Temporary Certificate of Approval is valid for up to 180 days unless an extension is granted under OAR 413-200- 0276(3).</i>	625		625
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>2,511</b>	<b>1,537</b>	<b>4,048</b>

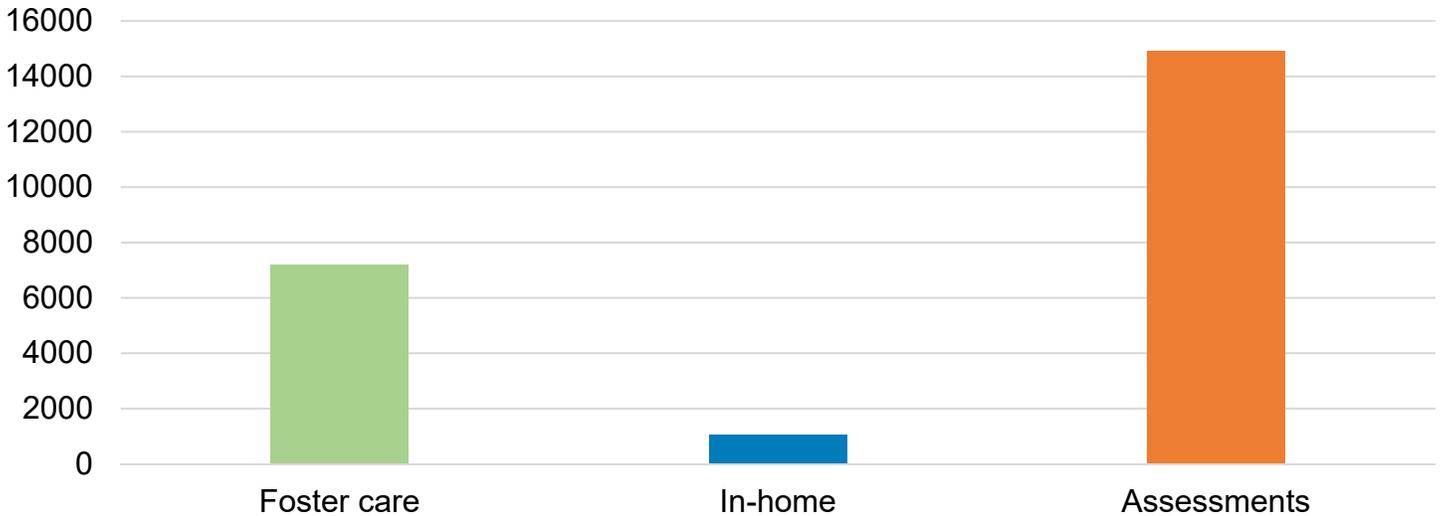
### Children and youth served in foster care

Each month's data point is a moving average of four months of data.

Measures	Desired direction of change	Average of 2/19 to 5/19	Average of 3/19 to 6/19	Average of 4/19 to 7/19	Change from prior month	Average of 4/18 to 7/18	Change from prior year	4-mo rolling average for last 12 months
Number of foster care entrants	↓	286	276	265	Improved	279	Improved	
Number of foster care exits	↑	293	311	313	Improved	332	Not improved	
Increase exits to entries ratio <sup>1</sup>	↑	1.02	1.13	1.08	Improved	1.19	Not improved	

<sup>1</sup> Exit to entry ratio: A ratio of 1 indicates the number of children entering care and the number of children exiting care matches. A ratio above 1 indicates exits exceed entries and is the desired outcome. A ratio below 1 indicates entries exceed exits and is not desired.

## Number of children in the Child Welfare system

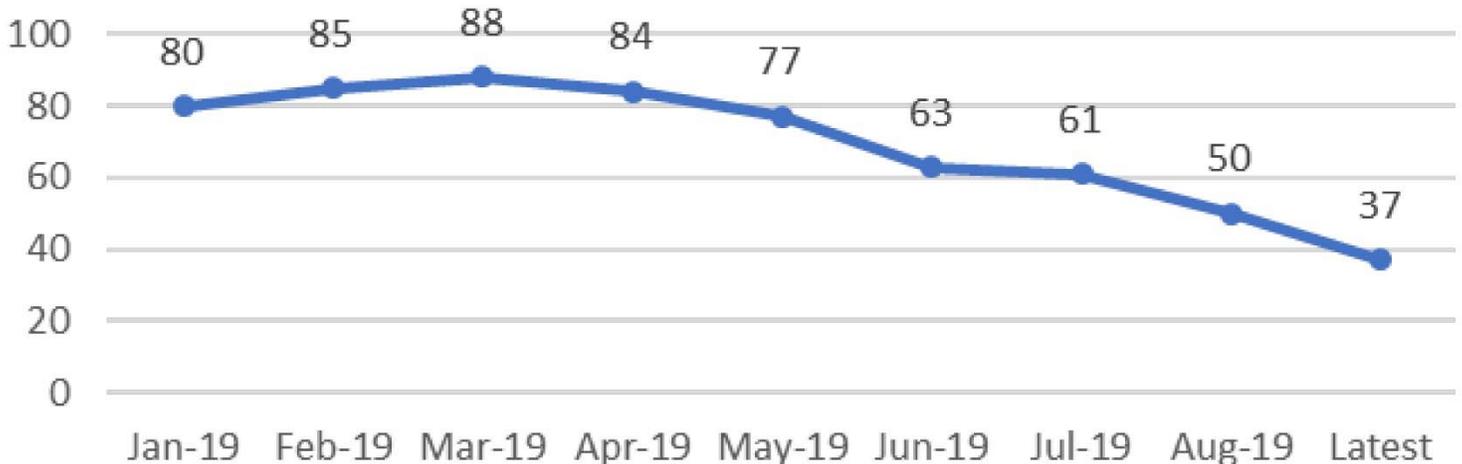


- **Foster Care:** A child is in foster care if they have a Foster Care Placement open of any type including residential facility/proctor home, family foster care (relative or not), detention, runaway, hospital, trial reunification, independent living, etc.
- **In-home:** A child is a “child served in home” if they have a CPS Case Type, with an Open Protective Action, Initial Safety Plan or Ongoing Safety Plan, and the child is not in Foster Care, or on adoption or guardianship services, or on an FSS Case Type once the FSS Assessment is approved.
- **Children on Open Assessment:** A count of alleged victims on open Child Protective Services (CPS) assessments.

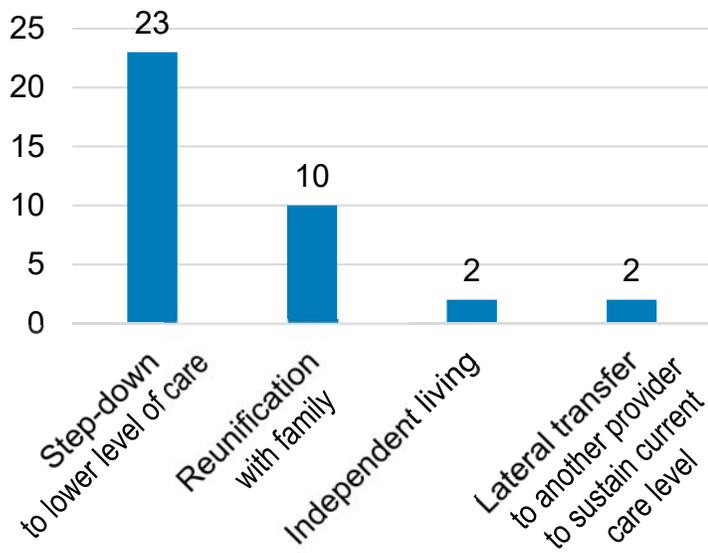
## Youth in foster care receiving treatment services outside Oregon

Oregon lacks capacity in residential treatment programs to serve all children and youth with complex or specialized needs and as a result, DHS sometimes places youth in foster care in treatment programs outside of Oregon. DHS is working with the Governor’s Child Welfare Oversight Board, the Oregon Health Authority and other partners to expand capacity to serve children and youth in Oregon.

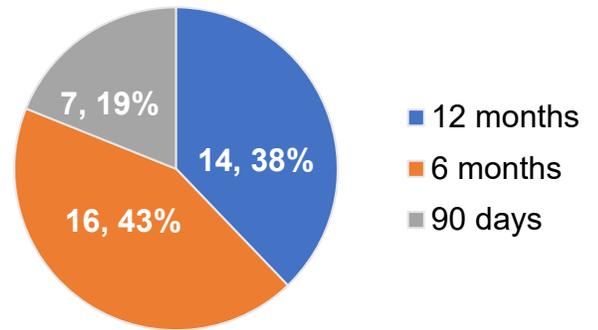
## Total youth in foster care served out of state



### Plan for returning youth in out-of-state placements to complete treatment plans



### Timeline for youth currently in out-of-state placements to complete treatment plans



# Foster Care

## August accomplishments

- With new funding in the 2019-21 DHS budget, Child Welfare is building a foster family retention and recruitment team. The first three Foster Family Champion positions for the team were hired and are working in Child Welfare districts covering Coos and Curry Counties; Salem, Polk and Marion Counties; and Multnomah County. Recruitment and hiring continues for the remaining Champions and a permanent manager.
- Casey Family Programs suggested the Child Welfare Foster Care team connect with a nationally recognized organization specializing in relative caregivers, called Second Chance. The Foster Care team launched an assessment to determine whether it will pursue a project with Second Chance to increase placement of children in foster care with relative caregivers.
- The Treatment Services team published a new website to provide monthly reports on youth in foster care with specialized needs who are served outside of Oregon (<https://go.usa.gov/xVnFZ>).

## August highlight

Child Welfare's Treatment Services program worked with Oregon providers to expand Behavioral Rehabilitation Services (BRS) capacity by 32 new beds since July to serve youth with specialized needs in residential settings.



## September priorities

- The Foster Care team is working with Alvarez and Marsal, the consulting team contracted by the Governor to assist Child Welfare, to streamline the foster parent certification process. The streamlined process will include an electronic application process and automated tracking of application progression through the certification process.
- Treatment Services is working to implement state and federal changes related to the safety of foster youth in residential treatment settings. The changes drive additional costs in Behavioral Rehabilitation Services (BRS), which are being addressed through a BRS Rate Model Update. Recommendations for the Rate Model Update are due in fall.
- The Oregon Social Learning Center identified training teams for 10 Oregon counties and will begin "train the trainer" sessions in the KEEP model (<https://www.oslc.org/projects/keep/>) designed to support foster families by promoting child well-being and preventing placement breakdowns. The first Tele-KEEP training for rural communities will be held and is set for September, and the Native American and Youth Family Center (NAYA) is preparing to provide KEEP to our Tribal families in the Portland metro area.

# Child Welfare Workforce

With investments from the Oregon State Legislature, Child Welfare is hiring new positions to reduce caseloads to more manageable levels in line with national averages and at the same time, working to reduce staff turnover.

## Data

### Rolling 12-month trend in Social Service Specialist (SSS1) 1 caseworker staffing

This is a monthly picture of the SSS1 workforce which includes every type of caseworker position. It shows a rolling 12-month trend. In February and March, the agency was unable to recruit new caseworkers due to the implementation of a new personnel data management system (Workday). The table reflects data available through July. August data is not yet available.

	2018					2019							12-MO AVG
	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN <sup>2</sup>	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	
Total number of new SSS1 caseworkers <sup>3</sup>	47	30	37	25	28	59	30	32	31	9	15	23	30.3
Total number of SSS1 caseworker separations	21	29	16	12	21	14	7	7	20	16	15	13	15.9
Impact on total caseworkers	26	1	21	13	7	45	23	25	11	(7)	(2)	10	14.4
Total number of SSS1 caseworker promotions <sup>4</sup>	7	3	11	6	7	20	8	10	10	2	1	1	7.2

### Staff hiring

During its 2019 session, the Oregon State Legislature authorized Child Welfare to hire more than 300 new staff members to improve safety and build capacity within the workforce. DHS announced recruitments in late July 2019 for a variety of positions.

### Staff hiring – Statewide

These two tables depict statewide and district-by-district summaries of position hiring by job classification, and the stage at which all applicants are in in the hiring process. It also shows the number of remaining vacancies left to fill and progress to completion by job classification. The tables reflect information from the July 22 through Sept. 16, 2019 timeframe.

Job Classification	Vacancies	Active Applications	Referred to Vidcuit	Completed Vidcuit Interviews	Conditional Job Offers Made	Remaining Vacancies	Progress to Completion
Supervisor (PEMC)	29	193	146	107	11	18	38%
MAPS (SSS2)	18	167	104	79	2	16	11%
Caseworker – CPS (SSS1)	60	474	310	187	26	34	43%
Caseworker – Permanency (SSS1)	60	666	380	238	24	36	40%
Caseworker – Foster Care Certifier (SSS1)	12	413	158	105	7	5	58%
Caseworker – General (SSS1)	37	286	130	85	4	33	11%
Caseworker – Hotline Screener (SSS1)	13	238	86	58	11	2	85%
Caseworker – ICWA (SSS1)	1	88	21	13	1	-	100%
Case Aide/Visitation aide (SSA)	82	1,266	720	442	45	37	55%
Office Specialist 2 (OS2)	36	1,304	560	314	28	8	78%
<b>Total</b>	<b>348</b>	<b>5,095</b>	<b>2,615</b>	<b>1,617</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>46%</b>

<sup>2</sup> Human Resource data sourced from Workday system, starting January 2019.

<sup>3</sup> New SSS1 caseworkers: Hired or promoted into SSS1 position from inside or outside DHS.

<sup>4</sup> Total number of SSS1 caseworker promotions: Promoted into a higher position within Child Welfare, a subset of caseworker separations.

## Staff hiring – by Child Welfare district

Location	Vacancies	Active Applications	Referred to Vidcruit	Completed Vidcruit Interviews	Conditional Job Offers Made	Remaining Vacancies	Progress to Completion
District 1	9	95	77	45	5	4	56%
District 2	52	1,043	388	245	21	31	40%
District 3	42	588	297	175	14	28	33%
District 4	11	273	157	96	7	4	64%
District 5	17	361	213	109	16	1	94%
District 6	40	344	239	163	11	29	28%
District 7	13	139	83	49	3	10	23%
District 8	42	130	94	56	7	35	17%
District 9	3	86	61	33	2	1	67%
District 10	25	394	226	154	18	7	72%
District 11	8	145	74	43	6	2	75%
District 12	6	113	65	43	5	1	83%
District 13	2	28	10	8	1	1	50%
District 14	25	314	155	112	10	15	40%
District 15	7	339	154	97	6	1	86%
District 16	24	261	141	86	9	15	38%
ORCAH	22	442	181	103	18	4	82%
<b>Total</b>	<b>348</b>	<b>5,095</b>	<b>2,615</b>	<b>1,617</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>46%</b>

District 1: Clatsop, Columbia and Tillamook  
 District 2: Multnomah  
 District 3: Marion, Polk and Yamhill  
 District 4: Benton, Lincoln and Linn  
 District 5: Lane  
 District 6: Douglas

District 7: Coos and Curry  
 District 8: Jackson and Josephine  
 District 9: Gilliam, Hood River, Sherman,  
 Wasco and Wheeler  
 District 10: Crook, Deschutes and Jefferson  
 District 11: Klamath and Lake

District 12: Morrow and Umatilla  
 District 13: Baker, Union and Wallowa  
 District 14: Grant, Harney and Malheur  
 District 15: Clackamas  
 District 16: Washington

# Child Welfare Workforce

## August accomplishments

- More than 90 recruitment requisitions were posted and closed in August to increase the Child Welfare field staffing levels. Interviews are taking place weekly in every district to ensure quick and efficient hiring decisions.
- Teams from several state agencies are lending assistance to DHS and are actively engaged in supporting the hiring surge efforts. The teams have successfully processed more than 5,000 applicants.
- Training schedules for new hires are complete and statewide training for supervisors and Mentoring, Assisting and Promoting Success (MAPS) staff are scheduled to prepare them to provide consistent support to new hires.

## September priorities

- The hiring surge remains the number one priority for workforce efforts in the month of September. Child Welfare is currently in the process of onboarding 95 new hires across the field with a goal of 150 new hires by the end of September.
- Final training plans for enhanced training are being developed to support the current and future needs of Child Welfare.
- The Child Welfare Workforce Development and Training Manager position recruitment will post and close in September.

## August highlight

An Oregon elementary school teacher had third graders pick one person they wanted to thank for a class project. One student chose their Oregon Child Welfare caseworker and sent the caseworker this picture.

Caseworkers are with children during some of the most difficult moments of their lives and work from there to raise up children and families to achieve brighter futures. The rewards of the work outweigh its challenges.

Videos are posted on our website to give people a peek into the roles of caseworkers in our child safety system. Go to [www.oregon.gov/dhs](http://www.oregon.gov/dhs) and search "#HelpKidsAndFamilies."

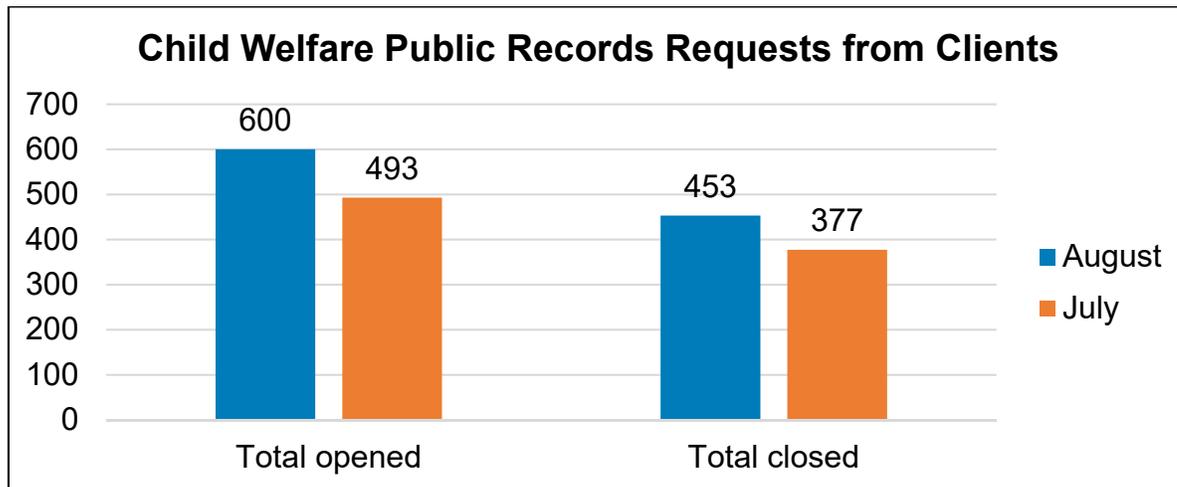


# Operational Support

The Governor's Executive Order No. 19-03 included direction to address operational challenges, including compliance with public records law and ensuring accurate and timely data is available to improve operations and processes.

## Data

The chart reflects the number of opened and closed Child Welfare client public records requests. It does not include records requests from other DHS divisions, legislators or media.



## August accomplishments

- DHS created a centralized Public Records Unit to respond to public records requests, track policy compliance and report outcomes. The unit was formed in June 2019, began processing Child Welfare client records requests in July and absorbed media records requests in late August. The unit expanded to 12 full-time equivalent positions and had a median processing time of 6.54 days in August.
- The DHS Office of Reporting, Research, Analytics and Implementation (ORRAI) continues work on 13 projects within the Child Welfare Research Agenda. In August, research projects hitting milestones in the development and implementation process included: Achieving permanency to reduce the likelihood of children returning to foster care within one year of family reunification; understanding the impact of staff retention to resolve retention issues; and reducing disparities at Child Welfare decision points to reduce the disproportionality of minority populations in foster care through collaboration with Oregon Tribes.

## September priorities

- The Public Records Unit starts processing Aging and People with Disabilities Program records requests on September 27, 2019 and is preparing to absorb records requests from all remaining parts of the department in November.
- In September, ORRAI is prioritizing work on research projects including the safety at reunification project where initial implementation sites will be determined to test the research tool and curriculum development will be prepared for initial implementation by late December. Analyses for out-of-state children is ongoing to further understand the children being served out of state. This includes comparison analyses on children being served in Oregon's foster care system. The study helps identify the needs of both children and primary caretakers. Scoping discussions and community building to establish the foundation for a study on the risk of severe maltreatment will take place.

