

State of Alaska FY2003 Governor's Operating Budget

Department of Health and Social Services Adoption Placement Program Component Budget Summary

Component: Adoption Placement Program

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Component Mission

The mission of the Division of Family and Youth Services (DFYS) is to protect children who are abused and neglected or at risk of abuse and neglect.

Component Services Provided

State and Federal law requires children that have been in foster care for 15 of the past consecutive 22 months to be placed into permanent homes. To comply with this law and to help eliminate the backlog of children in long-term foster care, the 1999 Legislature approved a two-year special appropriation to implement the State's permanency planning initiative, the Adoption Placement Program, formerly known as the Balloon Project.

The Adoption Placement Program or Balloon Project is a collaborative effort of the Department of Health and Social Services, the Department of Law, the Office of Public Advocacy and the Public Defenders Agency to move children who have lingered in the child protection system for more than three years into permanent placements. The project provides dedicated funds and has brought together these agencies to work as a team to accelerate the placement of children have remained in foster care into permanent care.

Component Goals and Strategies

1) CONTINUE THE ADOPTION PLACEMENT PROGRAM OR BALLOON PROJECT:

- Balloon Project funding enabled DFYS to hire 14 additional social workers to focus on the "transition" list of children that have been in custody the longest. The Department's FY2003 budget submittal includes provisions for continued implementation of the project. The continuation of this effort is critical to assure every child in state custody receives timely case plans and services, and exits custody within the statutory time limits. Continuation of this program will serve to further reduce backlogged cases and prevent future backlogs from occurring.
- Long-term benefits of this program include savings from reduced foster care caseloads, increased compliance with Federal and State permanency planning laws and prevention of a backlog of cases from happening again. Continued collaboration between DFYS and the State legal entities to process child protective services cases on a timely basis as well as more efficient operations, timely client case handling helps to prevent "problem" cases, and a child protection system that works better overall are additional benefits.

2) REDUCE THE LENGTH OF TIME BETWEEN INITIAL OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENT AND ALTERNATIVE PERMANENT PLANNING:

- Placement must be accomplished within the shortened time frames mandated by State and Federal law, including Alaska's HB 375 (Chapter 99, SLA 98) and the Federal Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1998. Those changes were intended to encourage and enable the State to emphasize permanency planning and to place children who are in State custody into stable, safe, supportive, and permanent homes without unnecessary delay.
- DFYS maintains RSA's with the Department of Law, the Public Defender Agency and the Office of Public Advocacy to address the problem of backlogged adoption court cases.

Key Component Issues for FY2002 – 2003

Placement must be accomplished within the shortened time frames mandated by State and Federal law, including Alaska's HB 375 (Chapter 99, SLA 98) and the Federal Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1998. Those changes were intended to encourage and enable the State to emphasize permanency planning and to place children who are in State custody into stable, safe, supportive, and permanent homes without unnecessary delay.

State and Federal law requires children that have been in foster care for 15 of the past consecutive 22 months to be placed into permanent homes. To comply with this law and to help eliminate the backlog of children in long-term foster care, the State's permanency planning initiative, the Balloon Project, was implemented. Continued efforts of this project through the Adoption Placement Program include a collaborative effort of the Department of Health and Social Services, the Department of Law, the Office of Public Advocacy and the Public Defenders Agency to move children who have lingered in the child protection system for more than three years into permanent placements. The project provides dedicated funds and all these agencies work as a team to transition these children out of foster care and into permanent homes.

Major Component Accomplishments in 2001

The Balloon Project has been extremely successful in reducing the foster care caseload backlog. One measure of the Balloon Project's success can be seen in the reduction of the growth of the foster care caseload. In FY1999 the foster care caseload increased by 16.4%. In FY2000, the growth rate decreased to 5.8%. In FY2001 the foster care caseload decreased 6.2%.

In FY2001 the project provided funding for an additional 14 DFYS social workers positions that worked exclusively on the "Transition List" of children that have been in custody the longest. The original transition list (Phase I) was created from those children who, on November 19, 1997 had been in custody 15 of the previous 22 months. Phase II were those children in custody more than 38 months as of January 1, 2000, Phase III were those children in custody between 27-38 months as of January 1, 2000, Phase IV are those children in custody 24 months as of September 2000, and Phase V are those children in custody 24 months as of April 2001. All of these children were in out-of-home custody who had not had parental rights terminated. Adoption Placement Planning social worker positions continued in FY2001 to focus on timely case plans and to provide services to those children that have been in the state's custody the longest.

Transition List as of October 15, 2001

Phase	Children	Adoptions	Guardianship	Other Permanent Placements	Awaiting
I	661	217	103	274	67
II	43	14	3	16	10
III	374	95	46	159	74
IV	366	71	40	119	136
V	186	10	5	22	149

Statutory and Regulatory Authority

- AS 47.05 Administration of Welfare, Social Services, and Institutions
- AS 47.10 Children in Need of Aid
- AS 47.14.100 Care of Children
- AS 47.17 Child Protection
- AS 47.40 Purchase of Services
- Titles IV-B and IVE-E Social Security Act
- Indian Child Welfare Act

**Adoption Placement Program
Component Financial Summary**

All dollars in thousands

	FY2001 Actuals	FY2002 Authorized	FY2003 Governor
Non-Formula Program:			
Component Expenditures:			
71000 Personal Services	0.0	0.0	820.8
72000 Travel	0.0	0.0	0.0
73000 Contractual	0.0	0.0	988.4
74000 Supplies	0.0	0.0	0.0
75000 Equipment	0.0	0.0	0.0
76000 Land/Buildings	0.0	0.0	0.0
77000 Grants, Claims	0.0	0.0	200.0
78000 Miscellaneous	0.0	0.0	0.0
Expenditure Totals	0.0	0.0	2,009.2
Funding Sources:			
1002 Federal Receipts	0.0	0.0	360.0
1004 General Fund Receipts	0.0	0.0	1,649.2
Funding Totals	0.0	0.0	2,009.2

Estimated Revenue Collections

Description	Master Revenue Account	FY2001 Actuals	FY2002 Authorized	FY2002 Cash Estimate	FY2003 Governor	FY2004 Forecast
Unrestricted Revenues						
None.		0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Unrestricted Total		0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Restricted Revenues						
Federal Receipts	51010	0.0	0.0	0.0	360.0	0.0
Restricted Total		0.0	0.0	0.0	360.0	0.0
Total Estimated Revenues		0.0	0.0	0.0	360.0	0.0

Adoption Placement Program

Proposed Changes in Levels of Service for FY2003

The budget for this program remains the same as authorized by the Legislature in special appropriations for the last three years.

Summary of Component Budget Changes

From FY2002 Authorized to FY2003 Governor

All dollars in thousands

	<u>General Funds</u>	<u>Federal Funds</u>	<u>Other Funds</u>	<u>Total Funds</u>
FY2002 Authorized	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Adjustments which will continue current level of service:				
-Transfer from the Balloon Project	20.8	1,546.6	0.0	1,567.4
-Fund Change from Federal Receipts to General Fund	1,186.6	-1,186.6	0.0	0.0
Proposed budget increases:				
-Statewide Adoption/Permanency Planning Increment	441.8	0.0	0.0	441.8
FY2003 Governor	1,649.2	360.0	0.0	2,009.2

Adoption Placement Program

Personal Services Information

	Authorized Positions		Personal Services Costs	
	<u>FY2002</u> <u>Authorized</u>	<u>FY2003</u> <u>Governor</u>		
Full-time	0	14	Annual Salaries	584,485
Part-time	0	0	COLA	13,794
Nonpermanent	0	0	Premium Pay	13,864
			Annual Benefits	227,394
			<i>Less 2.23% Vacancy Factor</i>	(18,737)
			Lump Sum Premium Pay	0
Totals	0	14	Total Personal Services	820,800

Position Classification Summary

Job Class Title	Anchorage	Fairbanks	Juneau	Others	Total
ChildrenS Services Spec II	1	0	0	0	1
Social Worker I (Cs)	2	0	0	1	3
Social Worker II (Cs)	2	2	1	3	8
Social Worker IV (Cs)	2	0	0	0	2
Totals	7	2	1	4	14