

State of Alaska FY2025 Governor's Operating Budget

Department of Family and Community Services Children's Services Training Component Budget Summary

Component: Children's Services Training

Contribution to Department's Mission

Provides for education and training to the Office of Children's Services' (OCS) Protective Services Specialists, Social Services Associates, and Foster Care Licensing staff, supervisors, and managers. Training is designed to:

- Enhance workers' ability to identify child maltreatment
- Assess safety and risk factors of children in their homes
- Mitigate safety and risk to the child within the family's home
- Enhance parental protective factors
- Achieve timely permanency for children
- Address child well-being
- Prevent child maltreatment whenever possible

Staff learn to effectively work with children and families to remedy factors leading to child maltreatment, assess for safety within the family home to determine ways that a child can remain safely in the family home, and identify when out-of-home placement is necessary to protect the child. Staff also learn how to assess the family's strength and needs, accurately assess when children can be safely returned to their parents, and identify when an alternative permanency plan is necessary. The child's well-being, including past trauma, is also addressed and, if needed, treatment is arranged to assure the child is developing appropriately. This includes field safety preparation prior to field work, travel, universal health and safety precautions related to mitigating risk of exposure to infections, diseases, and verbal de-escalation techniques. Front line supervisors are provided supervisory skills trainings, enhanced understanding of the 'OCS practice model, and coaching as a technique to develop worker's critical thinking skills.

Core Services

- Provide for education and training for Office of Children's Services child protection front line workers, foster care licensing workers, supervisors, managers, and other staff to enhance their skills and knowledge of the practice of child protection services.
- Multiple methods of training are used to achieve competency in child protective services practice including, face to face training, online modules, mentoring, supervisory coaching, and frequent webinars on selected topics.

Major Component Accomplishments in 2023

House Bill 151, "Children Deserve a Loving Home Act," provided for expanded training for front line case workers from three weeks to six weeks. In FY2022, the sixth week of training was delivered by the Mentor Program. This change allows for on-demand training in field offices based on practice issues identified more readily and delivered through hands-on workgroup approach versus lecture training.

Protective services supervisory staff are enrolled after initial supervisor training into the "Coaching Supervisors to Best Practice" program. This has allowed supervisors to enhance their utilization of coaching and knowledge of the practice model through safety assessments. Expansion of enrollment in the program has reinforced universal language across the agency as it relates to safety. All new Protective Services Specialists 4 (supervisors) are automatically enrolled in the coaching program.

Safety training was administered to new protective services staff by the OCS Safety Officer. The curriculum was changed to provide more skills and enhance competencies of verbal de-escalation and assessment of environment for safety considerations. The enhanced training taught the importance of preparation in reviewing the history of a case for safety considerations and preparation for field work and remote travel. Refinements of the training based on evaluation occurred and it now includes an online module to complete prior to the facilitated training for more practical application. Safety training is now open to all OCS staff versus only field staff.

In FY2023, Youth Mental Health First Aid was incorporated into Standards, Knowledge, and Insight Leading to Success (SKILS) in addition to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Training. The Youth Mental Health First Aid curriculum was inserted into new staff training as a direct result of the increasing numbers of suicide of youth in Alaska. The training provides recognition and tools for mental health to strengthen the response to youth suicide when it has come to the attention of the agency.

Key Component Challenges

The Office of Children's Services (OCS) recognizes that it must continue to provide appropriate and exemplary training to retain staff and achieve maximum federal reimbursement.

Standards, Knowledge, and Insight Leading to Success (SKILS) training, delivered by the University of Alaska's Child Welfare Academy, is mandatory for front line workers employed by OCS. OCS recognizes that continual updates and enhancements to training will always be necessary. The logistics of providing for training outside of the academy becomes a challenge with 22 outlying offices, some with only one or two workers. Internet connectivity and bandwidth problems in rural areas make web-based training difficult.

There have been many technological advancements for child welfare training simulation that appear to enhance readiness and preparation of new staff in navigating the challenges of entering family homes, worker environmental safety, and the practice of interviewing. Preparing staff with skills in a virtual training classroom is a challenge to create a realistic environment and may benefit from exploration of training simulators.

Since the shift to competency-based hiring for protective services staff it has been observed current training sometimes does not meet the needs of all incoming staff. A rigorous evaluation of the current training platform has occurred to best address the needs of onboarding. A shift to more "on the job" training format is anticipated in the future fiscal year.

Significant Changes in Results to be Delivered in FY2025

On-demand and practice model training will further enhance effective training for OCS staff resulting in improved outcomes in the field, and improved services offered to children and families. Region-specific and field office training efforts based on OCS continuous quality improvement data, will provide more responsive training for front-line workers and supervisors regarding specific areas that need improvement. In addition, evaluations are in development to inform the impact of training on front line staff competency development and monitoring of effectiveness of curricula. Good practices in the field also result in an increased ability to claim federal reimbursement, allowing for more services to be delivered. Focus has been placed on the investigation and assessment process to further enhance the staff's ability to recognize maltreatment in children and inform safety decisions.

To improve worker readiness at the field level, the OCS will focus specifically on training new protective services specialists, social services associates, and supervisors during their first year on the job. In addition, OCS will provide training to existing staff through monitoring of regional practice needs gathered through case reviews and the information management system data. Safety is a continued priority and regular webinars and trainings will be conducted through the Safety Program.

Statutory and Regulatory Authority

AS 18.05.010-070	Administration of Public Health and Related Laws
AS 47.05.010	Duties of department
AS 47.14.112	Training and Workload Standards
AS 47.14.100	Powers and duties of department over care of child

Social Security Act, Title IV-E, Title IV-B

Contact Information

Contact: Marian Sweet, Administrative Services Director
Phone: (907) 465-1630
E-mail: marian.sweet@alaska.gov

Component Detail All Funds
Department of Family and Community Services

Component: Children's Services Training (3322)
RDU: Children's Services (486)

Non-Formula Component

	FY2023 Actuals	FY2024 Enrolled	FY2024 Authorized	FY2024 Management Plan	FY2025 Governor Adjusted Base	FY2025 Governor	FY2024 Management Plan vs FY2025 Governor		
1000 Personal Services	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0%	
2000 Travel	159.6	114.0	114.0	114.0	114.0	114.0	0.0	0.0%	
3000 Services	1,761.8	1,506.7	1,506.7	1,506.7	1,506.7	1,506.7	0.0	0.0%	
4000 Commodities	1.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0%	
5000 Capital Outlay	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0%	
7000 Grants, Benefits	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0%	
8000 Miscellaneous	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0%	
Totals	1,922.6	1,620.7	1,620.7	1,620.7	1,620.7	1,620.7	0.0	0.0%	
Fund Sources:									
1002 Fed Rcpts (Fed)	582.1	709.6	709.6	709.6	709.6	709.6	0.0	0.0%	
1003 G/F Match (UGF)	246.4	300.2	300.2	300.2	300.2	300.2	0.0	0.0%	
1004 Gen Fund (UGF)	1,094.1	610.9	610.9	610.9	610.9	610.9	0.0	0.0%	
Unrestricted General (UGF)	1,340.5	911.1	911.1	911.1	911.1	911.1	0.0	0.0%	
Designated General (DGF)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0%	
Other Funds	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0%	
Federal Funds	582.1	709.6	709.6	709.6	709.6	709.6	0.0	0.0%	
Positions:									
Permanent Full Time	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%	
Permanent Part Time	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%	
Non Permanent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%	

Change Record Detail - Multiple Scenarios with Descriptions
Department of Family and Community Services

Component: Children's Services Training (3322)
RDU: Children's Services (486)

Scenario/Change Record Title	Trans Type	Totals	Personal Services	Travel	Services	Commodities	Capital Outlay	Grants, Benefits	Miscellaneous	Positions		NP
										PFT	PPT	
***** Changes From FY2024 Enrolled To FY2024 Authorized *****												
FY2024 Enrolled	Enrolled	1,620.7	0.0	114.0	1,506.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
1002 Fed Rcpts		709.6										
1003 G/F Match		300.2										
1004 Gen Fund		610.9										
Subtotal		1,620.7	0.0	114.0	1,506.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
***** Changes From FY2025 Governor Adjusted Base To FY2025 Governor *****												
Totals		1,620.7	0.0	114.0	1,506.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0

Line Item Detail (1676)
Department of Family and Community Services
Travel

Component: Children's Services Training (3322)

Line Number	Line Name		FY2023 Actuals	FY2024 Management Plan	FY2025 Governor
2000	Travel		159.6	114.0	114.0
Object Class	Servicing Agency	Explanation	FY2023 Actuals	FY2024 Management Plan	FY2025 Governor
2000 Travel Detail Totals			159.6	114.0	114.0
2000	In-State Employee Travel	Transportation and per diem costs for existing and new employees to attend educational and training sessions delivered at the Children's Services Training Academy. Additional travel expected for meetings related to the business process mapping related to mandatory noticing. The Office of Children's Services has been working to bring mandatory noticing into compliance with federal and court ordered actions.	149.5	109.0	109.0
2001	In-State Non-Employee Travel	In-State Non-Employee Travel	1.1	0.0	0.0
2002	Out of State Employee Travel	Out of state employee travel for training purposes	8.9	2.0	2.0
2006	Other Travel Costs	Cash advance fee	0.1	3.0	3.0

Line Item Detail (1676)
Department of Family and Community Services
Services

Component: Children's Services Training (3322)

Line Number	Line Name		FY2023 Actuals	FY2024 Management Plan	FY2025 Governor
3000	Services		1,761.8	1,506.7	1,506.7
Object Class	Servicing Agency	Explanation	FY2023 Actuals	FY2024 Management Plan	FY2025 Governor
3000 Services Detail Totals			1,761.8	1,506.7	1,506.7
3000	Education Services	Employee training services and conference fees.	20.6	2.0	2.0
3011	Other Services	Other costs associated with training front line case carrying employees.	0.0	32.9	32.9
3029	Inter-Agency Education/Training	Univ - Department-wide	1,741.2	1,431.8	1,431.8
		Reimbursable Services Agreement: University of Alaska Anchorage, Child Welfare Academy and Field Practicum Instruction. Administration and Operation through University of Alaska Anchorage of the Office of Children's Services Training Academy, Return to school program and the Student Recruitment Program. Includes costs to develop curriculum, and materials and technology to deliver current information for social worker staff. Cost to coordinate and facilitate presentation of training by other (outside) experts in the child protection field.			
3038	Inter-Agency Management/Consulting	Univ - Department-wide	0.0	40.0	40.0
		Reimbursable Services Agreement: University of Alaska Anchorage, School of Social Work, leveraging Title IV-E for a Child Welfare certificate program			

Line Item Detail (1676)
Department of Family and Community Services
Commodities

Component: Children's Services Training (3322)

Line Number	Line Name		FY2023 Actuals	FY2024 Management Plan	FY2025 Governor
4000	Commodities		1.2	0.0	0.0
Object Class	Servicing Agency	Explanation	FY2023 Actuals	FY2024 Management Plan	FY2025 Governor
4000 Commodities Detail Totals			1.2	0.0	0.0
4000	Business	Business	1.2	0.0	0.0

Revenue Detail (1681)
Department of Family and Community Services

Component: Children's Services Training (3322)

Revenue Type (OMB Fund Code) Revenue Source	Component	Comment	FY2023 Actuals	FY2024 Management Plan	FY2025 Governor
5002 Fed Rcpts (1002 Fed Rcpts)			582.1	709.6	709.6
5019 Federal - Miscellaneous Grants		Federal Receipts: Title IV-E of the Social Security Act- federal reimbursement based on allowable expenses and Title XIX Medicaid and Federal Project Revenue Federal Receipts: Title IV-E of the Social Security Act- federal reimbursement based on allowable expenses and Title XIX Medicaid and Federal Project Revenue	582.1	709.6	709.6

Inter-Agency Services (1682)
Department of Family and Community Services

Component: Children's Services Training (3322)

				FY2023 Actuals	FY2024 Management Plan	FY2025 Governor
Component Totals				1,741.2	1,471.8	1,471.8
With University of Alaska				1,741.2	1,471.8	1,471.8
Object Class	Servicing Agency	Explanation	FY2023 Actuals	FY2024 Management Plan	FY2025 Governor	
3029	Inter-Agency Education/Training	Univ - Department-wide	Reimbursable Services Agreement: University of Alaska Anchorage, Child Welfare Academy and Field Practicum Instruction. Administration and Operation through University of Alaska Anchorage of the Office of Children's Services Training Academy, Return to school program and the Student Recruitment Program. Includes costs to develop curriculum, and materials and technology to deliver current information for social worker staff. Cost to coordinate and facilitate presentation of training by other (outside) experts in the child protection field.	1,741.2	1,431.8	1,431.8
3038	Inter-Agency Management/Consulting	Univ - Department-wide	Reimbursable Services Agreement: University of Alaska Anchorage, School of Social Work, leveraging Title IV-E for a Child Welfare certificate program	0.0	40.0	40.0