

New Jersey Department of Children and Families

# WORKFORCE REPORT

2016-2017 Updates



**RUTGERS**

School of Social Work



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NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

# WORKFORCE REPORT

2016-2017 UPDATES

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This annual update to the *New Jersey Workforce Report* was possible because of the information, resources, and feedback shared in transparency by the New Jersey Department of Children and Families (DCF) and its community partners. The department continues to evolve its practice with families based on an underlying commitment to their overall safety and well-being. The efforts of the department professionals and community partners who continue to create this movement for children are to be applauded.

The report relies on the [New Jersey DCF Sustainability and Exit Plan](#), the [New Jersey DCF Commissioner's Dashboard](#), [New Jersey Kids Count](#), [New Jersey Civil Service Commission Job Descriptions](#), and a range of other available national data and benchmarks. The report also refers to current data, information, and materials provided by the New Jersey DCF's Office of Training and Professional Development (OTPD), Office of Human Resources (OHR), Office of Performance Management and Accountability (OPMA), and Office of the Commissioner.

There are many people who were responsible for the notable achievements outlined in this report. Each of the 5,000 professionals who are the NJ DCF are to be commended for their contributions. They continue to invest their time, energy and passion in their efforts to support children and families across the state largely because they care deeply about their welfare.

Special appreciation is extended to the following key collaborators of this report who shared their time, data, and expertise: Allison Blake, Suzanne Alvino, Laurie Hodian, Robert J. Butcavage, Nancy Carre-Lee, Joe Spilatore, Lisa Gallagher, Michelle Adams, and Dawn Konrady. Thank you to Catherine Liapes and Maria Fodali who shared their detailed eye on the format and editing of report information.

Acknowledgment must also be given to the National Child Welfare Workforce Institute for the Workforce Development Framework, which offers a valuable structure for guiding analysis of workforce characteristics and which organizes the model for this updated report.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The New Jersey Department of Children and Families (NJ DCF) continued targeted workforce and leadership investments during fiscal year 2016-2017 to further its commitment to maintaining and advancing a high level of professional and organizational functioning. The NJ DCF workforce continues to support the safety of children and the well-being of families with exceptional preparation, support, and steadiness.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS 2016-2017		
Descriptor	Performance Indicators	NJ DCF Achievements
<i>Qualified</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Position requirements include bachelor's degree and relevant child welfare or social work experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Applicants are required to have a BA and child welfare or social work experience, and receive preference for a BSW/MSW</li> </ul>
<i>Competent</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Specialized child welfare competencies and degree programs</li> <li>Expansive training opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NJ DCF supports specialized child welfare bachelor's and master's degrees (MCWEP/BCWEP)</li> </ul>
<i>Stable and Consistent</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low vacancy rate</li> <li>Turnover rate below national average (30%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NJ DCF achieved a 2.22% vacancy rate</li> <li>NJ DCF achieved a 8.91% turnover rate</li> </ul>
<i>Diverse and Reflective of Children Served</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Racial and ethnic identities of NJDCF professionals reflect the children receiving services</li> <li>Multigenerational range, with majority of workforce in prime working age span of 25-54 years</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The workforce's racial and ethnic identities are 44% Black, 22% Hispanic, 50% White, and 2% Asian or Native American</li> <li>12% of NJ DCF staff are 20-29yr; 45% are 30-39yr; 26% are 40-49yr; 18% are 50+yr</li> <li>NJ DCF staff are 83% female, 17% male</li> </ul>
<i>Committed</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Long length of tenure at the agency</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>69% have been with agency 6-30+ years</li> </ul>
<i>Adequately Compensated</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Starting salaries are higher than the national average for social workers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Caseworkers: \$49,000 - \$59,000</li> <li>Supervisors: \$65,000 - \$70,000</li> </ul>
<i>Well-Supported</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Caseloads for intake, adoption, and permanency are lower than the national standards and reflect Sustainability and Exit Plan benchmarks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>97% of Intake staff, 99% of Adoption staff, and 100% of Permanency staff have caseloads that meet these standards</li> </ul>
<i>Well-Supervised</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low supervisor-staff ratio</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NJ DCF's average supervisory ratio is 1 supervisor for 4.7 caseworkers</li> </ul>
<i>Well-Trained</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Caseload-carrying staff and supervisors receive at least 40 hours of annual in-service training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NJ DCF delivered 233,905 hours of training during the reporting period</li> </ul>
<i>Led with Vision and Heart</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leadership team implements a strong investment in workforce development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All 10 NCWWI workforce development framework components are addressed</li> </ul>





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## INTRODUCTION

The work of child welfare is highly complex. Child welfare professionals are challenged to ensure that children and youth are both free from immediate harm and protected from future risks when any form of maltreatment is suspected. They are called upon to make careful assessments that lead to difficult decisions within highly stressful environments. They must navigate multiple systems to forge collaboration with stakeholders in law enforcement, health care, education, the judiciary, substance abuse, domestic violence, and mental health. All of those interactions occur predominantly within the very human context of a family.

According to the American Public Human Services Association (2010), a child welfare agency must make workforce development a priority for the following reasons:

*“A well-trained, highly skilled, well-resourced, and appropriately deployed workforce is foundational to a child welfare agency’s ability to achieve the best outcomes for vulnerable children, youth, and families.*

*The workforce is the agency’s public face to the children, youth, and families it serves. In addition, stakeholder make judgements about an agency’s competence and effectiveness base for the most part on the actions of its workforce.*

*The workforce is both the most important and the most expensive resource in which child welfare agencies must invest to achieve their goals and objectives.*

*Studies have established a causal relationship between a capable child welfare agency workforce and positive case outcomes. This includes the influence of workforce capacity on placement stability, maltreatment recurrence, reunification, and foster care and permanency outcomes.*

*When a workforce possesses adequate attributes, skills, knowledge, abilities, and resources, the agency will be better positioned to engage clients and improve client outcomes through the services they provide.*

*When management has a clear understanding of the requirements for building a strong and vibrant workforce the agency will be able to use resources more effectively and efficiently.”*

This report highlights the multilayered, comprehensive approach NJ DCF has used to achieve a high level of workforce and leadership functioning as well as system reform benchmarks in its commitment to the safety and well-being of children across the state.

NJ DCF has made workforce development an agency priority and has achieved a number of significant outcomes (Munson, 2015, 2016). NJ DCF leadership has been able to successfully facilitate the implementation of an array of strategies in each of the essential components of a national best practice approach to comprehensive workforce development (NCWWI, 2015b).

This report offers key indicators of performance and related strategies that reflect NJ DCF’s ongoing commitment to child welfare workforce development, leadership, and organizational health. The report particularly focuses on the more than 3,000 professionals within the Division of Child Protection and Permanency (DCP&P), which is responsible for the safety of New Jersey’s children. It explores the workforce capacity of NJ DCF and guides stakeholders, policy makers, advocates, and the general public in inquiries, such as the following:

**WHO** are the NJ DCF staff and what are the demographics and characteristics of family service specialists, supervisors, managers, and leaders?

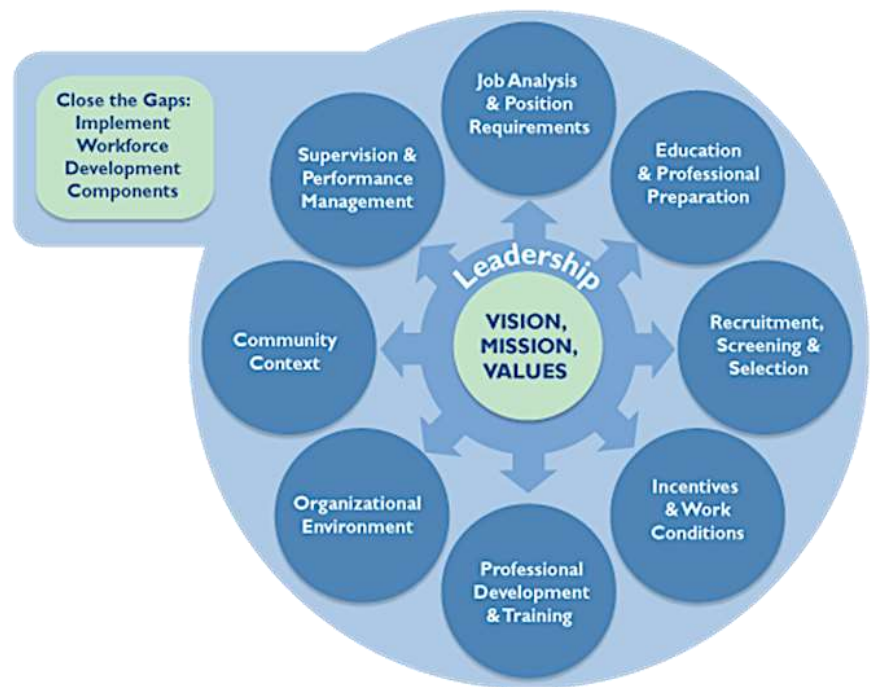
**WHAT** are the performance indicators and achievements of the workforce over the last five to ten years?

**WHERE** does NJ DCF continue to make investments to develop a qualified and stable staff capable of delivering effective child welfare services?

**WHY** is it critical that NJ DCF continues to advance professional practices and leadership development as necessary elements in achieving reform benchmarks and sustainable agency performance?

**HOW** has NJ DCF’s comprehensive approach been implemented over time?

NJ DCF's approach to workforce development applies the National Child Welfare Workforce Institute’s (NCWWI) Workforce Development Framework to construct the components necessary to support an effective, highly functioning system of professionals. In this report, each subsection of the framework is used to explore how NJ DCF has uniquely invested in key areas and presents data and information updated for the 2016–2017 fiscal year.



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# APPROACH TO WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

## Actualizing Vision, Mission and Values

Agency vision, mission, and values are central features of workforce development, as they provide a unifying foundation for the work and inform the competencies needed for quality practice. A clear statement of agency mission, vision, and values—along with a comprehensive practice model—sets the stage and helps guide effective workforce development strategies.

NJ DCF was created in 2006 as the state’s first comprehensive child protection and child welfare agency. Following a mission and mandate to ensure the safety, well-being, and success of New Jersey’s children and families, DCF’s vision is to ensure a better today and an even greater tomorrow for every individual the agency serves. In order to operationalize its mission, the agency crafted a set of Core Values.<sup>1</sup> These values guide professionals in the decisions and interactions underlying their practice with families.

### CORE VALUES

We value the unique strengths, needs and abilities of all individuals.

We achieve positive outcomes through individualized, family-oriented, child and youth centered services.

We foster healthy relationships that promote safety and well-being for children, youth, adults and families.

We are ethical, fair and transparent in all that we do.

We are culturally aware, informed and responsive; we value and respect diverse traditions, heritages, and experiences.

We work in partnership with individuals, families and the community, as well as with other state departments and within DCF, to build connection, strength and success.

We are professional, highly trained and committed to the communities we serve.

We provide excellent customer service so anyone can easily find and access services when needed.

We provide innovative solutions aligned with community needs.

We are accountable to our partners, ourselves and the communities we serve.

We are good stewards of the resources entrusted to us.

We continually seek to learn and correct ourselves when needed to provide the very best solutions for children, youth, individuals and families.

We recognize and respond to the impact of traumatic stress on those who have contact with our system.

We listen to and communicate openly and honestly with the community and with our partners.

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<sup>1</sup> See <http://www.state.nj.us/dcf/about/strategic.html>.

## Practice Model Underlying Workforce Interactions

NJ DCF developed a Case Practice Model<sup>2</sup> in collaboration with the Child Welfare Practice and Policy Group and in 2008, launched a comprehensive, five-year immersion process to introduce it across the state.<sup>3</sup> This phased rollout was initiated with the New Jersey Child Welfare Training Partnership and the state's Training Academy (currently known as the Office of Training and Professional Development), facilitating learning around this model as new sites were identified. Today, it is the role of DCF Case Practice Liaisons, assigned to each local office, to coach and mentor staff in facilitating Family Team Meetings, assisting the direction of case practice components, identifying areas for performance improvement, and facilitating various initiatives to support strengthened case practice. NJ DCF now has Case Practice Liaison/Specialist positions across the agency to support the application of the model to direct practice efforts with children, youth, and families.

NJ DCF continues to provide intensive Case Practice Model training and launched a refreshed *Case Practice Guide*<sup>4</sup> to reorient the workforce to fundamental elements in the practice model. The agency also systematically delivered the “Back to Basics” training and coaching program into late 2016. This initiative was delivered across NJ DCF’s 46 local offices to re-immense staff in the essential elements of core values and interactions in their work with families.

## Strategic Priorities and Plan

NJ DCF develops a set of strategic priorities and creates an accompanying Strategic Plan<sup>5</sup> every two years to guide its continued advancement and effectiveness. Strategic priorities for the 2016–2018 period include the following themes:

- Seamless System of Care
- Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)
- Partnerships
- Communication
- Organizational Development

These core priorities are woven across NJ DCF programmatic goals and professional practices. Elements of each are evident in the focus of interactions with families and external providers and between partnering units, in the execution of targeted initiatives, and in the ongoing work within NJ DCF’s daily rhythm.

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<sup>2</sup> See <http://www.state.nj.us/dcf/about/welfare/case/>.

<sup>3</sup> See <http://muskie.usm.maine.edu/helpkids/telefiles/061912tele/NJ%20NRCOI%20Webinar%206-19-2012%20Rev.ppt>.

<sup>4</sup> See [http://www.nj.gov/dcf/documents/divisions/Case Practice Case Guide 2016.pdf](http://www.nj.gov/dcf/documents/divisions/Case%20Practice%20Case%20Guide%202016.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> See [http://www.nj.gov/dcf/about/NJ DCF Strategic Plan 2016 2018 1116 FINAL.pdf](http://www.nj.gov/dcf/about/NJ%20DCF%20Strategic%20Plan%202016%202018%20FINAL.pdf).

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## LEADERSHIP THAT DRIVES OUTCOMES

Strong child welfare leaders impact the outcomes of children and families by providing direction for and accountability of services provided to them, setting expectations for the values and quality of personnel interactions, and pacing the ability of an agency to initiate and carry forward change initiatives. Without effective leadership capacity and training, child welfare managers are prone to a “compliance-driven, problem-focused and people-processing approach rather than responding strategically to organizational. Political and social challenges” (Dickinson, 2014).

NJ DCF applies a variety of leadership strategies to support workforce development and promote positive organizational health. NJ DCF leadership reflects the foundational elements of effective leadership practice in child welfare: adaptive, collaborative, distributive, inclusive, and outcome-focused (NCWWI, 2015).

### Executive Leadership

NJ DCF continues to convene quarterly Leadership Meetings, monthly Statewide Managers/Area Directors Meetings, and biweekly, three-hour Executive Leadership Team Meetings. The primary goals of these meetings are for senior staff to spend time together over interdepartmental initiatives and to engage in decision-making processes, share data, review progress, and plan execution of upcoming initiatives.

NJ DCF leadership is proactive in disseminating information at all levels throughout the agency. During fiscal year 2017 quarterly leadership meetings, agenda topics included the DCF strategic plan, data analysis on disproportionality, communication methods and tools, formation of a disaster resource group, safety workgroup updates, NJ DCF’s CQI Plan, and immigration issues and their effect on families. DCF encourages leadership to use this time to connect with their peers in order to develop connections and supportive working relationships.

### The Local Office Manager as Leader

As a learning organization, NJ DCF is committed to investing in ongoing capacity-building for managers of teams that support children and families across the state. An example of the investment is the DCP&P Local Office Manager (LOM) Professional Development Continuation Program. Funded by Casey Family Programs and delivered in partnership with Rutgers’ Institute for Families, the program conducted a two-day conference on September 14 and October 25, 2016, entitled “*Managing with Heart, Leading with Vision.*” The conference focused on developing the internal capacity of LOMs. This series guided LOMs in recognizing the behaviors of adaptive and culturally responsive leaders capable of fostering effective performance management and promoting a results-oriented office culture.

Specialized sessions held in fiscal year 2018 continued development of the LOMs as coaches and mentors. LOMs were exposed to leadership methodologies focusing on evidenced-informed coaching models to ensure success in developing their direct reports. This project occurs in two phases. The first phase delivered in the fall of 2017, included three workshops that were specific to behavior modification, coaching, and the application of coaching practice. Education was designed to support the new learning occurring in the Leadership Series for Casework Supervisors, “middle-managers,” who are their direct reports. The second phase will consist of targeted skill-building practice.

#### FEEDBACK FROM LOM CONFERENCE

"It was great to dialogue with other leaders in the agency and get ideas to improve my leadership."

"Fabulous job! I would like to continue to meet with LOMs to discuss solutions that work in their offices."

"Have us return every six months for more learning and empowering us as leaders!"

### The Casework Supervisor as Leader

Following a commitment to enhance and support the development of leadership throughout the organization, DCF and the OTPD partnered with the Casey Family Programs and the New Jersey Child Welfare Training Partnership to develop a specialized series of learning events for Casework Supervisors (CWS), mid-level managers who lead teams of supervisors and caseworkers across the state’s network of local offices. Designed to enhance leadership skills, the Leadership Series for Casework Supervisors, educates 200 middle managers over two years through full-day learning experiences followed by smaller coaching circles. Coaching circles allow the middle managers to practice and apply the information learned in the sessions. The participants also develop individual portfolios that guide them in the application of practices to their everyday responsibilities.

The series launched in the spring of 2017. A survey administered to NJ DCF leadership and the entire network of casework supervisors determined areas of study. Survey results guided learning objectives so that they would develop competency areas that are fundamental to the work of a child welfare middle manager (NCWWI, 2010). The leadership areas prioritized for focus during the series were: Accountability; Developing Others: Motivating Growth; Enhancing Strategies for Conflict Resolution; Strategic Thinking; External Awareness; and Vision. Eight additional learning experiences and more than 30 coaching circles will be scheduled throughout the first half of fiscal year 2018.

### The Supervisor as Leader

A targeted series of Enhanced Supervisory Workshops were held for Intake and Permanency Supervisors to support development of their leadership and managerial skills. These interactive sessions brought together supervisors for reflection on the challenges and opportunities inherent in their specific. Explored over a total of six sessions, the supervisors received training that offered guidance on how to manage in crisis, how to have difficult conversations, how to interpret and apply data to their decision-making.



## Leadership in the Field

Ongoing collaboration is also facilitated through regular meetings with groups of staff who hold parallel positions and perform the same functions within state offices across the state. These statewide meetings have been held for Resource Development Specialists, SPRU (Special Response Units) Coordinators, and Case Practice Specialists to ensure consistent practice across the state, to spur solution-sharing methods, and to create a network of support among peers with similar responsibilities.

# JOB ANALYSIS AND POSITION REQUIREMENTS

High employee turnover rates in child welfare agencies can impact organizations at the employee, client, and organizational levels of performance. Agencies that utilize innovative and diversified recruitment strategies are more likely to attract candidates for positions that fit their level of interest and skill while increasing their retention (Gentles-Gibbs, 2016). NJ DCF continues to institute a variety of key strategies to clearly articulate and recruit staff with competencies and professional values aligned with the mission and vision of the agency.

## Employee Qualifications

Available positions require a bachelor’s degree, New Jersey residency, and relevant child welfare and social work experience, which DCF defines as “professional social work, direct support counseling, guidance, or case management involving high-risk child abuse and neglect or other problematic situations involving counseling services to clients with social, emotional, psychological, or behavioral problems, including gathering and analyzing information, determining needs, and planning and supporting and/or carrying out treatment plans.” NJ DCF’s requirements<sup>6</sup> are shown in Table 1:

TABLE 1: POSITION REQUIREMENTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES	
Position Title	Position Requirements and Preferred Qualifications
Family Service Specialist Trainee (FSS TR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Graduation from an accredited college or university with a bachelor's degree</li> <li>• Preferred: Bachelor’s or master’s degree in social work</li> </ul>
Family Service Specialist 2 (FSS 2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Graduation from an accredited college or university with a bachelor's degree</li> <li>• One (1) year of related experience</li> </ul>
Family Service Specialist 1 (FSS 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Graduation from an accredited college or university with a bachelor's degree</li> <li>• Two (2) years of related experience</li> </ul>
Supervising Family Service Specialist 2 (SFSS 2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Graduation from an accredited college or university with a bachelor's degree</li> <li>• Three (3) years of related experience</li> </ul>
Supervising Family Service Specialist 1 (SFSS 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Graduation from an accredited college or university with a bachelor's degree</li> <li>• Four (4) years of related experience</li> <li>• One (1) year of experience in supervisory capacity</li> </ul>
County Services Specialist (CSS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Graduation from an accredited college or university with a bachelor's degree</li> <li>• Four (4) years of related experience</li> <li>• Two (2) years of experience in program administration</li> </ul>

<sup>6</sup> Retrieved from [http://www.state.nj.us/csc/seekers/jobs/announcements/title\\_search.html](http://www.state.nj.us/csc/seekers/jobs/announcements/title_search.html)

NJ DCF receives 12,000 to 14,000 resumes annually and fills positions from a well-qualified pool of applicants. NJ DCF staff responsibilities and competencies are listed by position title in Appendix A.

### Recruitment, Screening, and Selection

In order to remain in compliance with the Sustainability and Exit Plan’s requirement to maintain caseload standards, it is critical that New Jersey’s Office of Human Resource recruits candidates on an ongoing basis to provide DCP&P with qualified, prescreened candidates who are ready to fill vacant positions.

### Dedicated Recruitment Unit

NJ DCF’s Office of Human Resources (OHR) has a Dedicated Recruitment Unit that focuses on making DCF employment a *“job of choice rather than default.”* The team focuses on building a robust process for recruitment of high-quality applicants, in particular for the entry-level casework title, Family Service Specialist Trainee (FSST). OHR also engages in targeted recruitment for staff with specific qualities, such as bilingual staff, new casework staff trainees, Assistant Family Service Workers (AFSW), and clerical positions. The goals of the Dedicated Recruitment Unit are noted in Table 2.

TABLE 2: GOALS OF THE DEDICATED RECRUITMENT UNIT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To enhance the professionalism of the department’s workforce by strengthening the workforce qualifications and expectations</li><li>• To attract highly qualified individuals to NJ DCF</li><li>• To provide an equal opportunity for potential job seekers to apply for vacancies</li><li>• To systematically collect information about each job seeker’s ability to meet the requirements of the advertised position</li><li>• To select candidates that will be successful in performing the tasks and meeting the responsibilities of the position</li><li>• To provide a pool of prescreened, qualified candidates</li></ul>

### Multiple Platforms for Marketing Employment Opportunities

The OHR Recruitment Unit uses multiple platforms to recruit for various positions. The unit lists its positions on NJ DCF’s public website, as well as on the New Jersey Civil Service Commission’s website. The unit recruits on other websites as well such as Indeed.com, Monster.com, Careerbuilder.com, and NASWNJ.org, and at colleges and universities throughout New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania. The unit also works with the State of

New Jersey’s contracted advertising agency to place specific newspaper ads in *Al’Dia*, *Atlantic City Press*, *Camden Courier Post*, and the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. In addition, unit staff attend Job Fairs/Career Days sponsored by colleges and other private or public entities to meet specific recruitment needs. As in previous years, the vast majority of FSSTs hired during this reporting period were selected after application through advertisements on two public websites: <http://www.nj.gov/dcf/about/employment/dcpp/> and <http://www.state.nj.us/dcf/about/employment/dcf/>.

### Targeted Recruitment for Bilingual and Latina Candidates

Recruitment efforts are especially focused on increasing the pool of qualified bilingual FSST candidates, especially those that are Spanish speaking. OHR contacted 24 organizations in New Jersey that serve Hispanic populations and asked them to share the FSST Bilingual Job Posting with their members. OHR placed the FSST Bilingual Job Posting in 31 news publications serving New Jersey that specifically target Spanish-speaking populations. OHR also posted the FSST Bilingual Job Posting on DCF’s website and on the New Jersey Civil Service Commission’s website. In addition, a representative of DCF appeared on *Latino Motion*, a public affairs television program that airs locally in the Southern New Jersey Region and on YouTube, to spread the word about bilingual FSST job openings.

### Job Fests

Job Fests are events that recruit academically qualified staff, with demonstrated competencies assessed through verbal and written communication, problem analysis, and decision-making skills. Among the 12,000 to 14,000 resumes received every year, candidates with the following criteria are invited to Job Fests:

- Bachelor’s or master’s degrees in Social Work
- Social Work—related degrees with six months of social work experience
- Social Work—related degrees with no experience
- Bilingual in Spanish and English with any bachelor’s or advanced degrees
- Disabled veterans and veterans with any bachelor’s or advanced degrees

Attendance at each event include, 25 to 75 candidates, 24 DCP&P field staff/interviewers, and 13 OHR staff. Each Job Fest is approximately three to four hours. One to four events are held each month throughout the state. Over the past three years, from 2015 through 2017, the number of Job Fest events have increased as characteristic of growing recruitment success. Table 3 notes the number of Job Fests held over the past three years.

TABLE 3: NUMBER OF JOB FESTS HELD	
Time Period	Events
CY 2015	27
CY 2016	35
CY 2017	40

Following the Job Fest, OHR starts the process of completing background checks for those candidates who successfully passed the Job Fest process. These checks include verification of employment references, prior New Jersey State employment verifications, driving abstracts, and Child Abuse Record Information. Once successful background checks are conducted and candidates' files are complete, including an official sealed college transcript, the successful candidates are added to a hiring matrix, ranked according to the work locations they have indicated as their preference. The updated matrix is sent to all local offices every Friday.

As vacancies occur, the local offices use the updated matrix to call candidates in for "meet and greet" sessions to determine if they are a good fit for that particular office. When a candidate is selected for hire, they are scheduled for fingerprints, and a criminal history background check is run. If cleared, a selected candidate is given a date of hire.

Candidates remain on a hiring matrix and are eligible for hire up to 18 months after their Job Fest date. New candidates are constantly being added to the hiring matrix as they pass the process and background checks. Table 4 shows highlighted recruitment outcomes for NJ DCF while table 5 provides a detailed description of Job Fest activities the across the agency's local offices.

**APPLICANT EXPERIENCE**

"I applied through a recruiter. If you are picked for an interview, they will mail you a packet to fill out to bring to the Job Fest. At the Job Fest, you are interviewed by several people from different locations. They decide if they want to offer you a personal interview. A lot of the questions are scenario questions. They want to see how you would react in different situations."

" I received an interview invitation to a Job Fest for the FSST position by mail. Once I accepted they sent me an application packet to bring completed to the interview day including references. They go over a few documents to make sure you completed them correctly. Described what does an FSST does and gave us a writing sample task. They give you a case scenario and ask you a few questions on how you will handle the situation, how and who you will investigate to get the correct facts."

<b>TABLE 4: HIGHLIGHTED RECRUITMENT OUTCOMES</b>	
<b>Recruitment Statistics for Calendar Year 2016</b>	
•	5,600 applicants were invited to a Job Fest
•	45% of invited applicants attend a Job Fest
•	76% of Job Fest participants are moved through to a formal interview
•	46% of interviewed applicants "pass" the process to become eligible for hire in an active pool ready for local office selection

**TABLE 5: DESCRIPTION OF JOB FEST ACTIVITIES ACROSS LOCAL OFFICES**

DATE	REGION	LOCATION	TITLE	INVITED	CONFIRMED	INTERVIEWED	UNSAT INTERVIEW	UNSAT DL	UNSAT OTHER	PASSED	% PASSED	
1/7/2016	NORTH/CENTRAL	PROFESSIONAL CENTER	AFSW1	143	42	30	5	0	0	25	83%	
1/14/2016	SOUTH	CAMDEN AREA OFFICE	AFSW1	128	70	55	35	4	0	16	29%	
1/28/2016	METRO	PROFESSIONAL CENTER	AFSW1	144	112	85	38	13	2	32	38%	
2/11/2016	NORTH/CENTRAL	PROFESSIONAL CENTER	FSST	144	61	47	8	1	1	37	79%	
2/18/2016	METRO	PROFESSIONAL CENTER	FSST	156	69	48	14	9	7	18	38%	
2/25/2016	SOUTH	CUMBERLAND/GLOUCESTER/SALEM AREA OFFICE	FSST	100	53	38	18	4	1	15	39%	
3/17/2016	SOUTH	CAMDEN AREA OFFICE	FSST	155	74	50	16	4	3	27	54%	
4/7/2016	NORTH/CENTRAL	PROFESSIONAL CENTER	AFSW1	142	72	45	18	4	1	22	49%	
4/14/2016	METRO	PROFESSIONAL CENTER	AFSW1	177	95	80	27	19	7	27	34%	
4/21/2016	SOUTH	CUMBERLAND/GLOUCESTER/SALEM AREA OFFICE	FSST	146	57	44	24	7	1	12	27%	
4/27/2016	CENTRAL	MONMOUTH NORTH LOCAL OFFICE	FSST	116	63	48	16	4	5	23	48%	
5/5/2016	NORTH/CENTRAL	PROFESSIONAL CENTER	FSST	198	63	59	15	5	8	31	53%	
5/12/2016	METRO	PROFESSIONAL CENTER	FSST	184	73	65	20	13	6	26	40%	
5/19/2016	SOUTH	CAMDEN AREA OFFICE	FSST	139	70	53	14	8	3	28	53%	
6/7/2016	NORTH/CENTRAL	PROFESSIONAL CENTER	FSST	232	81	57	20	0	2	35	61%	
6/16/2016	METRO	PROFESSIONAL CENTER	FSST	192	88	74	35	10	3	26	35%	
6/23/2016	SOUTH	CUMBERLAND/GLOUCESTER/SALEM AREA OFFICE	FSST	154	63	45	18	4	4	19	42%	
7/14/2016	NORTH/CENTRAL	PROFESSIONAL CENTER	FSST	350	88	73	28	8	1	36	49%	
7/28/2016	SOUTH	CAMDEN AREA OFFICE	FSST	181	82	58	26	5	3	24	41%	
8/4/2016	CENTRAL	OCEAN/MONMOUTH AREA OFFICE	FSST	145	59	52	20	3	1	28	54%	
8/11/2016	METRO	PROFESSIONAL CENTER	FSST	201	83	67	24	13	3	28	42%	
8/18/2016	SOUTH	CAMDEN AREA OFFICE	FSST BILINGUAL	81	45	34	15	8	4	7	21%	
9/15/2016	NORTH	PROFESSIONAL CENTER	FSST BILINGUAL	110	76	55	18	5	0	34	62%	
8/25/2016	SOUTH	CUMBERLAND/GLOUCESTER/SALEM AREA OFFICE	FSST	182	90	82	27	8	0	47	57%	
9/20/2016	SOUTH	CUMBERLAND EAST LOCAL OFFICE	AFSW1	121	49	41	20	7	3	11	27%	
9/22/2016	METRO	PROFESSIONAL CENTER	FSST	172	77	66	25	10	11	20	30%	
9/29/2016	SOUTH	CAMDEN AREA OFFICE	FSST	173	82	64	29	3	0	32	50%	
10/6/2016	NORTH	PROFESSIONAL CENTER	FSST	161	88	71	21	15	0	35	49%	
10/20/2016	METRO	PROFESSIONAL CENTER	FSST BILINGUAL	116	81	44	10	6	3	25	57%	
10/27/2016	SOUTH	CAMDEN AREA OFFICE	FSST	148	68	55	32	1	0	22	40%	
11/2/2016	CENTRAL	OCEAN/MONMOUTH AREA OFFICE	FSST	140	61	48	16	0	1	31	65%	
11/17/2016	NORTH	PROFESSIONAL CENTER	FSST	195	89	60	19	10	8	23	38%	
12/1/2016	SOUTH	CUMBERLAND/GLOUCESTER/SALEM AREA OFFICE	FSST	169	63	43	17	1	0	25	58%	
12/6/2016	SOUTH	CUMBERLAND EAST LOCAL OFFICE	AFSW1	142	72	43	12	4	3	26	60%	
12/8/2016	METRO	PROFESSIONAL CENTER	FSST	172	76	56	19	12	0	25	45%	
<b>TOTALS</b>				<b>32</b>	<b>5609</b>	<b>2535</b>	<b>1935</b>	<b>719</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>898</b>	<b>47%</b>

## A Steady Workforce with Strong Retention Rates

Retaining a high-quality child welfare workforce is one of the greatest challenges child welfare agencies face. The job duties of caseworkers can be demanding with long hours. High rates of turnover and vacancies can result in increased stress for caseworkers, worse outcomes for children and families, and a negative effect on the organization as a whole (Johnco, Salloum, Olson, & Edwards, 2014). The impact of a child having more than one caseworker has been found to be detrimental. It forces children and families to start over with new workers and often leads to increased mistrust and delays in reaching goals.

As table 6 highlights, NJ DCF continues to maintain a workforce with very few open, unfilled positions. *Vacancy rates are less than 3%* in all categories of child welfare staff and supervisory positions. The vacancy rate decreased slightly during the report period year from 2.34% in fiscal year 2016 to 2.22% in fiscal year 2017.

TABLE 6: VACANCY RATES (as of June 2017)				
Position Title	Total Positions	Current Employees	Approved to Fill Vacancies	Vacancy Rate
Family Service Specialist Trainee	373	371	2	0.54%
Family Service Specialist 2	2117	2057	60	2.83%
Family Service Specialist 1	800	780	20	2.50%
Supervising Family Service Specialist 2	659	652	7	1.06%
County Services Specialist	79	78	1	1.27%
Supervising Family Service Specialist 1	208	204	4	1.92%
TOTAL	4236	4142	94	2.22%

## Committed Professionals with Low Turnover

Lower rates of turnover have shown to have positive effects on child and family outcomes. Consistency and continuity of caseworkers are among of the most important factors in achieving positive outcomes (Williams & Glisson, 2013; Flower, McDonald, & Sumski, 2005). Research demonstrates that as the number of caseworkers serving individual children increases, the percentage of children achieving permanency decreases (Flower, McDonald, & Sumski, 2005).

High rates of turnover and vacancies also have financial implications for an organization. One estimate revealed that a department loses \$54,000 for each lost employee, given the expense of recruiting, screening, selecting, and training new staff (Patel, McClure, Phillips, & Booker, 2017). Turnover causes longer time in placement for children, higher costs for agencies, and increased stress for the remaining caseworkers.

Average annual turnover rates for public child welfare/protection agencies range from 20% to 40% (NCWWI, 2011). By comparison, even as the department has expanded the size of its caseload carrying (CLC) workforce, *NJ DCF's turnover rate at 8.9% remains significantly lower than national averages*. Furthermore, over the past 11 years, there has been an overall decrease of 5.7% in turnover<sup>7</sup> rates.

Table 7 illustrates the total number of caseload carrying staff<sup>8</sup> employed by NJ DCF over the course of year, compared to the average number of caseload carrying staff employed annually, and the rate of growth from the previous year.

The data in table 7 also presents the number of staff separations.<sup>9</sup> Table 8 further defines these separations by the classification of the caseload carrying staff. The highest percentage of separations (11%) occur during the trainee phase, before familial relationships are formed and significant long-term investment of resources in worker tenure are made.

TABLE 7: TURNOVER OF CASELOAD-CARRYING STAFF (CY)												
Indicator	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005
Total CLC Staff	2,650	2,559	2,545	2,511	2,590	2,495	2,494	2,449	2,513	2,498	2,401	2,155
Average CLC Staff	2,605	2,552	2,528	2,551	2,543	2,495	2,472	2,481	2,506	2,450	2,278	2,038
CLC Growth	3.56%	0.55%	1.35%	-3.05%	3.81%	0.04%	1.84%	-2.55%	0.60%	4.04%	11.42%	12.18%
Total FSS Separations	232	178	183	195	192	175	158	130	194	254	235	299
Turnover Rate	8.91%	6.97%	7.24%	7.65%	7.55%	7.02%	6.39%	5.24%	7.74%	10.37%	10.32%	14.67%

TABLE 8: TURNOVER OF FSS STAFF (CY)												
Indicator	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005
FSS 1 Separations	36	31	25	37	32	42	28	15	29	46	31	36
FSS 2 Separations	154	125	142	117	126	112	115	106	127	132	137	151
FSS Trainee Separations	42	22	16	41	34	21	15	9	38	76	67	112

<sup>7</sup> Turnover is defined as separation from DCF and does not include internal promotions or position changes.

<sup>8</sup> Data from December 2016 "Workload by Worker Type" report (NJ SPIRIT) by NJ DCF Office of Human Resources

<sup>9</sup> Data from NJ Personnel Management Information System (PMIS) by NJ DCF Office of Human Resources



As table 9 illustrates, the *tenure of DCF staff remains high*. Approximately half (47%) have been employed by the State for more than ten years and more than two-thirds (69%) have been employed by the State for 6 or more years.

Manageable caseload sizes, supervisory ratios, enhanced training, as well as the salary-benefits package and ability to earn overtime, contribute to retention. These factors also support enhanced morale, collaboration in local offices, and greater ability to focus on serving the needs of the families and children, all of which contribute to greater job satisfaction.

TABLE 9: TENURE IN YEARS (as of June 2017)											
Total		< 1	1	2	3	4-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-30	> 30
FSS TR	366	312	29	7	4	5	6	3	-	-	-
FSS 2	2,064	7	231	210	123	338	638	476	34	6	1
FSS 1	778	-	-	-	-	16	194	412	95	46	15
SFSS 2	651	-	-	-	-	1	73	316	201	46	14
CSS	78	-	-	-	-	-	-	43	18	11	6
SFSS 1	204	-	-	-	-	-	-	64	74	40	26
Total	4,141	319	260	217	127	360	911	1,314	422	149	62
Percentage		7.7%	6.3%	5.2%	3.1%	8.7%	22.0%	31.7%	10.2%	3.6%	1.5%

### Diversity Reflective of Children Served

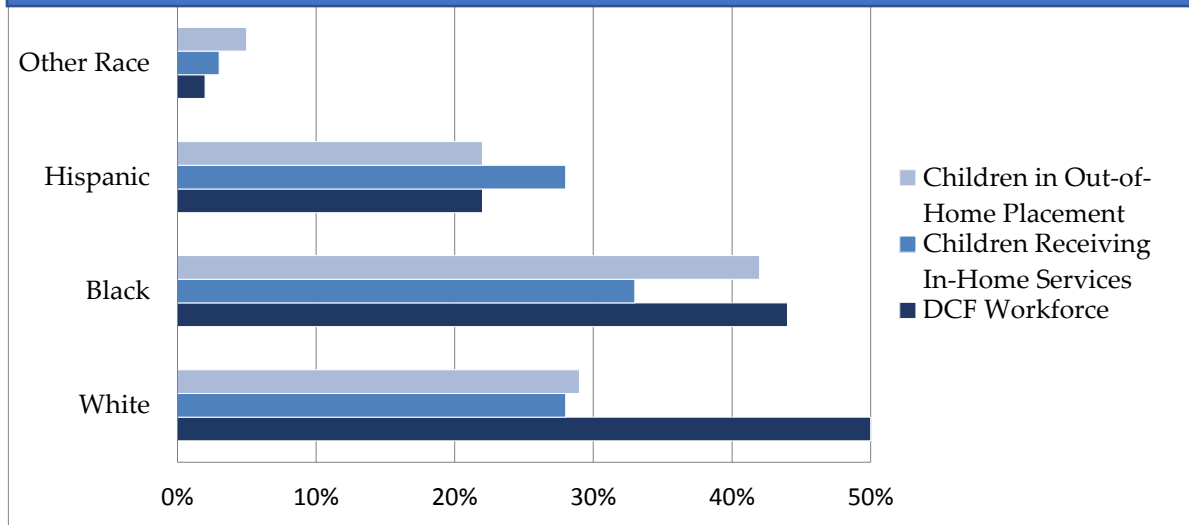
Diversity in staff demographics is another indicator of effective workforce development. An agency that employs staff reflective of the communities served is better equipped to engage and partner with its consumers and stakeholders (NCWWI, 2015b). As Figure 1 underscores, the *race and ethnicity of the child welfare staff generally reflect children served by NJ DCF*:<sup>10</sup>

The DCF workforce identifies as 50% white, 44% black and 22% Hispanic, with 2% identifying as Asian or Native American. A national study showed that 58% were white, 24% were black and 15% were Hispanic, with 4% identifying as other (Dolan, Smith, Casanueva, & Ringeisen, 2011).

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<sup>10</sup> Data from NJ Kids Count, [http://acnj.org/downloads/2016\\_06\\_06\\_nj\\_kids\\_count\\_state\\_of\\_child\\_well\\_being\\_.pdf](http://acnj.org/downloads/2016_06_06_nj_kids_count_state_of_child_well_being_.pdf)

**FIGURE 1: RACE/ETHNICITY OF NJ DCF WORKFORCE AND CHILDREN INVOLVED WITH CP&P (as of October 2017)**



In addition to racial/ethnic diversity, diversity of gender and age in a workforce is also important. A workforce composed of different age demographics creates an environment where each generation brings different skills and talents to the table, ensuring that an organization isn't overly dependent on young staff who may not be ready to settle into a specific role or organization, or older staff who may soon retire. As Table 10 indicates, approximately one tenth of the staff (12.1%) are in their twenties, and less than one-fifth (16.8%) are older than 50, with the vast majority (71.1%) between 30 and 49 years of age. This is similar to national averages which showed a majority of caseworkers (72%) were 25 to 44 years old (Dolan, Smith, Casanueva, & Ringeisen, 2011). In terms of gender diversity, 83% of workers are female and 17% male. This reflects the national trends regarding gender distribution in social services and child welfare (NCWWI, 2011; Dolan, Smith, Casanueva, & Ringeisen, 2011).

**TABLE 10: NJ DCF STAFF GENDER AND AGE (as of June 2017)**

Position Title	Gender		Age (Years)				
	Female	Male	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
Family Service Specialist Trainee	316	50	186	124	42	13	1
Family Service Specialist 2	1,667	397	304	1,013	473	205	69
Family Service Specialist 1	663	115	9	392	201	120	56
Supervising Family Service Specialist 2	553	98	-	267	245	99	40
County Service Specialist	67	11	-	29	28	16	5
Supervising Family Service Specialist 1	180	24	-	43	89	48	24
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,446</b>	<b>695</b>	<b>499</b>	<b>1,868</b>	<b>1,078</b>	<b>501</b>	<b>195</b>
<b>PERCENTAGE</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>12.1%</b>	<b>45.1%</b>	<b>26.0%</b>	<b>12.1%</b>	<b>4.7%</b>

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## EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION

### Formalized Education

NJ DCF supports specialized programs for students who are committed to child welfare careers and to current NJ DCF supervisors seeking to enhance their own career trajectories within the agency. DCF supports specialized child welfare educational programs for both Bachelor's and Master's degrees in social work designed for students who are committing to child welfare careers or seeking to enhance them: the BCWEP and the MCWEP.<sup>11</sup> Core competencies for both programs are located in Appendix B.

Formally initiated in November 2005, **the Baccalaureate Child Welfare Education Program (BCWEP)** is a partnership among a consortium of baccalaureate social work education programs, the NJ DCF, and the New Jersey Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers. The Lead Institution is Stockton University. Partnering schools include Centenary University, Georgian Court University, Monmouth University, Ramapo College, Rutgers University-Camden/New Brunswick, Rutgers University-Newark, and Seton Hall University.

BCWEP focuses on building competencies related to workplace management, human behavior and the social environment, ethnic sensitive and multicultural practice, and core child welfare practice. BCWEP offers a generalist social work curriculum, specialized child welfare coursework, child welfare field placement experiences, opportunities for peer connection and support, plus NJ DCF Work Readiness Training.

NJ DCF also supports the **Masters Child Welfare Education Program (MCWEP)**, which was formally initiated in June 2012 as a partnership among NJ DCF, the New Jersey Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers, and a consortium of three graduate social work programs. The Lead Institution is Stockton University. Partnering schools for fiscal year 2016 and 2017 include Kean University, Monmouth University and Rutgers University. Kean University joined the MCWEP Consortium this year, beginning their first cohort of MCWEP students in September 2017.

The goal of MCWEP is to enhance the knowledge and skills of supervisors currently employed at the NJ DCF DCP&P through completion of a Master's Degree in Social Work (MSW). Through participation in MCWEP, DCP&P supervisors broaden their perspectives on social work and child welfare (including evidence-based public child welfare practice), develop advanced clinical skills, and deepen their supervisory skills so that they become more confident supervisors and mentors in their work with at-risk children and families and more effective leaders in promoting exemplary practice within New Jersey's public child welfare system.

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<sup>11</sup> See <http://www.stockton.edu/bcwep> and <http://www.stockton.edu/mcwep> for more information

**TABLE 11: SPECIALIZED CHILD WELFARE EDUCATION OUTCOMES**

	Focus	Total Students	Demographics	Graduates
<b>BCWEP</b>	<i>Bachelor's degree students with specialization &amp; commitment to child welfare</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 450 individuals funded over the past 13 years</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participant identity breakdown:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 47.9% White</li> <li>✓ 30.1% African American</li> <li>✓ 8.8% Hispanic/Latino</li> <li>✓ 2.7% Asian</li> <li>✓ 1.3% Other</li> <li>✓ 1% Hawaiian/Pacific</li> <li>✓ 0.1% Native American</li> </ul> </li> <li>• 130 (28.8%) of BCWEP graduates hired by NJ DCF are bilingual</li> <li>• 53% of this past year's cohort identified their ethnicity as other than white</li> <li>• Historically, over 52% of BCWEP are professionals of color</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 346 (77%) of the 450 students who graduated and moved into the child welfare workforce at NJ DCF DCP&amp;P are still employed</li> </ul>
<b>MCWEP</b>	<i>Supervisors at NJ DCF DCP&amp;P</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 93 supervisors funded over the first five years</li> <li>• 96% now serving in leadership positions:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 23 are SFSS1s (Casework Supervisors)</li> <li>✓ 69 are SFSS2s (Supervisors)</li> <li>✓ 5 are LOMS (Local Office Managers)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 87% are women representing hundreds of years of combined supervisory experience</li> <li>• 39% are African American, 25% are Latino, and 27% are Caucasian</li> <li>• MCWEP students are divided among three consortium schools and represent 75% of DCP&amp;P local and area offices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100% of the first mid-2012 cohort graduated by May 2016</li> <li>• 100% of the second cohort graduated by December 2016</li> <li>• 100% of the third cohort is on track to graduate by December 2017</li> <li>• All of cohorts 4 and 5 are on schedule to graduate by December 2018 and 2019, respectively</li> <li>• Only 4 (4%) students have separated from MCWEP</li> </ul>

## BCWEP PARTICIPANT EXPERIENCES

"I believe that BCWEP prepared me tremendously well to become an efficient DCP&P worker. My field instructor exposed me to so much throughout the internship. I know there is a lot I still need to learn, but I think BCWEP gives a great introduction and preparation for what it's like when you become an official worker."

"I think BCWEP has done a great job preparing me. I was exposed to a lot of different units and situations in the field, while learning very important things during training that will help me with any difficulties I have."

"The child welfare coursework was a brief introduction to the field of child welfare. The DCP&P internship put those brief introductions into practice and the training provided additional support to strengthen my knowledge and skills. Because of these three components, I feel prepared to be successful in this field."

## MCWEP PARTICIPANT EXPERIENCES

"MCWEP is a supportive, educative, and important program that allows Child Welfare Supervisors and Case Work Supervisors to enhance their abilities and knowledge in an extremely supportive environment. We become a family. We help each other grow and are there to support each other. We have each other to learn from and depend on."

"MCWEP allows Child Welfare Supervisors and Case Work Supervisors to enhance their abilities, knowledge, and strengths in order to provide our most vulnerable populations with the best possible service."

"The strengths of MCWEP are that the program continuously provides knowledge about the child welfare system, and that it allows us the opportunity of sharing this information with our staff to enhance our case practice within the organization. I relay this information to my staff constantly through meetings and trainings."

"The MSW course work has provided me with tools I can utilize with clients and supervisees. I now understand negative client behaviors and I have a better understanding of psychiatric evaluations. Throughout my MSW program I have become more enlightened to the oppression and discrimination in the United States and around the world. I am able to recognize educational and systemic oppression and discriminatory practices."

"The Learning Community meetings are a good way to debrief about what we are learning, as the different universities have different approaches. The professors at the Learning Community help us apply what we are learning to our work and explore how it is relevant and how we can use it."

## Intensive Preparation for New Workers

The diverse background of new hires demands a comprehensive professional development structure that begins with preservice education to prepare them for their work with families but also continues throughout the career. Some new hires enter the child welfare workforce with skills and experience, but may or may not have social work degrees. For those that do not have a child welfare track in their social work program, or for those that may not have a social work educational background at all, training is key (NCWWI, 2015b).

NJ DCF provides new caseworkers with an onboarding process that includes a significant orientation program, preservice training, peer mentoring and coaching, and gradual assumption of a caseload. NJ DCF's onboarding approach ensures a combination of classroom instruction and fieldwork to incrementally introduce new staff to a broad array of learning experiences in child welfare. Because the skill set required to effectively deliver child welfare services takes time to develop and apply, NJ DCF has crafted an approach to ensure that all new caseworkers are afforded the most supportive introduction to child welfare work, as well as appropriate and adequate training and gradual exposure to cases.

### FEEDBACK FROM TRAINEES

*Child Protective Services and the Legal System:*  
"Excellent. Pertinent information to our job and helpful tips for improving court testimony."

*Everyday Self - Defense:*  
"Left with great tools given to keep myself safe."

*Human Trafficking:*  
"I truly enjoyed this training. The materials were extremely powerful and informative."

"The knowledge you brought to this training truly allowed me to see how relevant this topic is."

*Working with Arab-American & Muslim Families:*  
"I think this should be a mandatory training and other professionals and communities should take this to learn more about culture rather than assuming and discriminating against it."

The Office of Training and Professional Development and the New Jersey Child Welfare Training Partnership (NJCWTP) provide formal training during the new worker's initial training year through preservice and foundation courses. New workers receive the benefit of being assigned in learning cohorts for their preservice training and continue in this cohort throughout the period of their foundation training.

## Gradual Case Assignment

New caseworkers are gradually assigned cases<sup>12</sup>, as ongoing permanency workers are not placed into child protective investigation positions due to the complexity and advanced training needed for those positions.

After completing Module 7 of the Preservice Training program — Functional Assessments for Child Well-Being, Safety, and Risk, new caseworkers are assigned one or two cases incrementally (approximately three to four weeks after the Preservice Training program begins). Table 12 shows the timetable for assigning cases to new caseworkers.

TABLE 12: SCHEDULE FOR GRADUAL CASE ASSIGNMENT	
Period	Case Assignment
4 Weeks to 3 Months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supervisor begins to assign one or two cases to new caseworkers only after completion of Module 7 of the Preservice Training</li> <li>Supervisor gradually assigns additional cases as appropriate</li> <li>By the end of the third month of employment, new caseworkers may have a total of seven cases</li> </ul>
4 to 6 Months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supervisor gradually assigns one case per week until new caseworkers receive up to eight additional cases</li> </ul>
6 Months and Beyond	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>15 families per caseworker</li> </ul>

Care is taken to ensure that new caseworker caseloads are diverse in population, service needs, and procedural content and reflect different case situations, such as a child in out-of-home placement, a multi-issue family (e.g., substance abuse, homelessness), a child in residential placement, and a case in litigation. New caseworkers may be assigned low- or moderate-risk cases and may not be assigned very high-risk cases at first, such as complex cases of sexual abuse and the most difficult physical abuse cases.

## Foundation Course Study in Issues Affecting Families

Following their case assignments, time spent in the field supporting children and families, and mentoring received from their Field Training Unit, local office teams, and supervisors, new workers continue their learning path through a series of foundation courses. These training experiences expose new workers to the issues most likely to threaten a child's safety and challenges to family well-being. Training content ranges from substance abuse to domestic violence, and courses are offered through the first 18 months of a new worker's tenure with NJ DCF. A full listing of offerings is included in Table 13 below.

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<sup>12</sup> A case is defined as a child served by the family.

**TABLE 13: NEW DCP&P WORKER TRAINING**

Section	Course
Orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Worker Orientation: Welcome to DCF! (3 days)</li> <li>• Car Seat Safety (1 day)</li> <li>• Safety Awareness for the Child Welfare Professional (2 days)</li> </ul>
Preservice Offerings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hybrid Computer Orientation (1 day)</li> <li>• Module 1: Understanding Child Welfare in New Jersey (3 days)</li> <li>• Module 2: Cultivating Awareness: Promoting Worker Safety, Well-Being, and Success (2 days)</li> <li>• Module 3: Focusing on Families from Screening to Closing (4 days)</li> <li>• Module 4: NJ SPIRIT (2 ½ days)</li> <li>• Module 5: Child Development and Identifying Abuse and Neglect (4 days)</li> <li>• Module 6: Making Visits Matter (3 days)</li> <li>• Module 7: Simulation (5-7 days)</li> <li>• Administrative Hearings (2 hours)</li> <li>• CSOC – Introduction to Children’s System of Care (half day)</li> <li>• Disaster Preparedness/Emergency Response (1 hour)</li> <li>• Educational Stability (half day)</li> <li>• Introduction to Testifying in Court (half day)</li> <li>• NJ Parent Link (half day)</li> <li>• Parent Advocacy (half day)</li> <li>• Using Genograms and Ecomaps (1 day)</li> <li>• Worker2Worker (half day)</li> </ul>
Foundation Classes (taken in first 18 months of employment)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case Practice Module 3: Facilitating the Family Team Meeting Process (3 days)</li> <li>• Substance Abuse Module 1: Substance Abuse and Child Welfare (1 day)</li> <li>• Substance Abuse Module 2: Substance Use Disorders, Treatment and Recovery (1 day)</li> <li>• Substance Abuse Module 3: Mental Illness (1 day)</li> <li>• Substance Abuse Module 4: Case Planning (1 day)</li> <li>• Concurrent Planning (3 days)</li> <li>• Mental Illness (1 day)</li> <li>• Mental Health Screening Tool (1 day)</li> <li>• Red Flags (1 day)</li> <li>• Child Sexual Abuse: Module 1 (4 days)</li> <li>• Child Sexual Abuse: Module 2 (4 days)</li> <li>• Domestic Violence (2 days)</li> <li>• Domestic Violence Protocol (1 day)</li> <li>• Human Trafficking 1 (2 days)</li> <li>• Human Trafficking 2 (2 days)</li> <li>• Drug Awareness (half day)</li> </ul>



## Field Training Unit Support

Each NJ DCF local office has an established Field Training Unit (FTU), composed of seven new workers. The new professionals report to their Field Training Unit on fieldwork days during the entire Preservice Training period. The Field Training Unit supports the development of new workers into well-rounded professionals suitable for transfer in six months (or slightly less time if the new worker shows exceptional progress, as outlined in NJ DCF policy) to regular units within NJ DCF CP&P's local office. The unit supports a local office's overall effort to train new workers and to provide internships for BSWs and MSWs, when appropriate.

During a new worker's assignment to a unit, the Field Training Unit Supervisor is responsible for ensuring that the new worker is familiar with their work site; local office procedures and systems; and the overall community environment, including programs and services and resources available to support families in the local office's vicinity.

## Updated Field Training Unit Guide

During fiscal year 2017, the Office of Training and Professional Development (OTPD) worked in collaboration with the FTU Supervisors to update the *Field Training Guide* used by new workers to guide their orientation period. The content focus emphasized support for transfer of learning. The guide updates include specific experimental learning to be completed with the support and coaching of the FTU Supervisors in-between classroom-based learning sessions. In addition, the OTPD designs workshops for the FTU supervisors on a monthly basis to increase and strengthen their coaching skills and teaching methodologies.

## Refreshing the Preservice Approach

During fiscal year 2017, DCF's OTPD began an assessment of the preservice process to realign learning needs and content. This process sought to ensure that, 1) training, policy, and practice are aligned, 2) training is tailored to be most effective for adult learners, and 3) information learned in training can be generalized back to the field for successful transfer of learning.

Several steps were taken toward these goals. First, OTPD gathered information about all mandatory classes to document the rationale for requiring the course (e.g., policy driven, performance results) and to determine alignment with best practices. Curriculum origin informed whether the current materials could be altered or modified, and the sequencing of classes determined if prerequisite knowledge and/or experience would enhance the learning and the transfer of learning that topic. Information was gathered from workers through focus groups, one set consisting of workers who had completed the preservice training in the past two years and the other set consisting of workers who had completed preservice training two to five years ago. These focus groups were conducted in the northern, central, and southern regions of the state. The following questions were asked in all six focus groups:

1. *Overall, what Preservice class was most helpful? Why?*
2. *What Preservice class was least helpful? Why?*
3. *What training topics should have been included but were not?*
4. *Which aspect of the Case Practice Modules (CPM) was most helpful?*
5. *Ideally, when should new workers learn CPM?*
6. *Did you complete any Preservice courses online or were they all classroom-based?*
7. *Was the simulation experience helpful? Why?*
8. *Did the Field Training Unit experience during Pre-Service support what you were learning in the classroom? How so?*
9. *What was most helpful about the Field Training Unit experience?*
10. *While in Preservice training, did you experience any inconsistencies in what you were learning?*
11. *Is there anything else that you think would be helpful for us to know as we consider updating Preservice training?*

OTPD also solicited feedback from DCP&P leadership and current preservice trainers about the preservice process. Information was gathered in the mandatory classes that required or would benefit most from field experience and practice knowledge before being completed. This inquiry will inform the learning sequence to enhance knowledge gain within the training and impact transfer of learning once in the field. Based on the information received, OTPD will also identify whether courses not currently part of the preservice model should be introduced to new workers. Current efforts anticipate a pilot of the new preservice coursework for the summer of 2018.

Additional information around the specific structure and supports provided by the *Field Training Unit* can be found in Appendix D, while expectations for the *New Worker Training* process and content can be found in Appendix E.

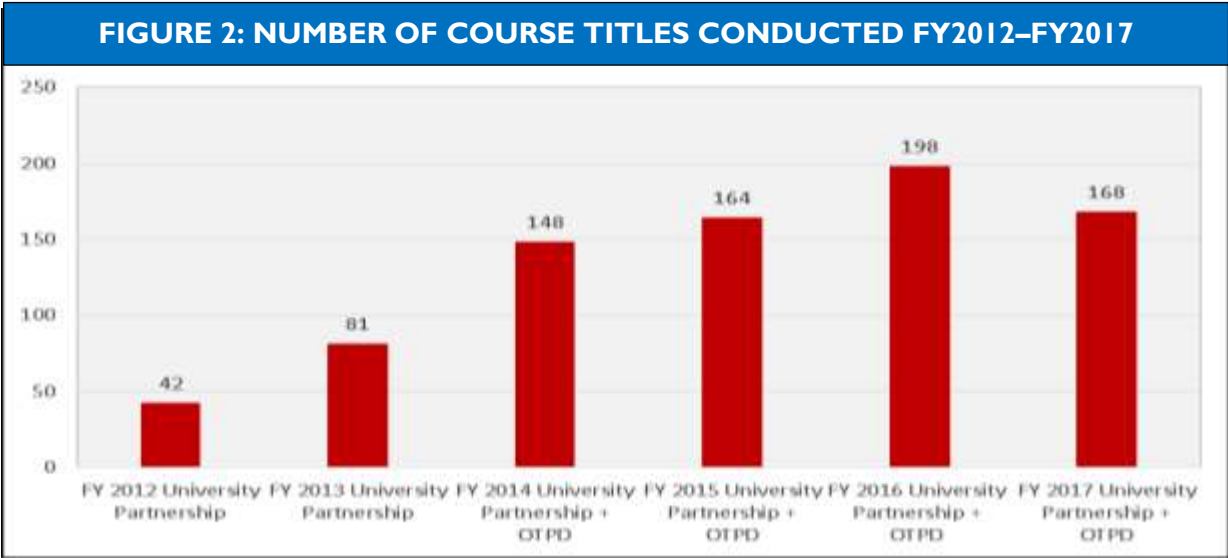
# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

It is important to have competency-based training for child welfare staff, from preservice and beyond. The training must provide relevant and ongoing opportunities for knowledge and skill development (NCWWI, 2015a). It is also important that all levels of leadership model and promote the value of continuous learning and professional development (NCWWI, 2015b). In addition to the professional development that training offers, research has also found that having access to ongoing training was associated with employee retention (Clark, Smith, & Uota, 2013).

As a result of its commitment to professional development and training, NJ DCF employs a well-trained workforce in which professionals across all levels enjoy access to a broad array of learning topics, participate collectively in more than a quarter-million hours of annual training, and demonstrate a significant and growing knowledge gain after their learning experiences.

## Access to a Variety of Course Topics

Helping staff grow professionally is a critical workforce development strategy. NJ DCF has made a significant investment in staff training and professional development. The NJCWTP provides professional development to the DCF workforce through a comprehensive catalogue of course offerings. As shown in figure 2 and further noted in Appendix C, the NJCWTP provided an extensive menu of professional development to the entire DCF workforce. One hundred and sixty-eight unique course titles were delivered in fiscal year 2017.<sup>13</sup>



<sup>13</sup> See the full Course Catalogue at <https://socialwork.rutgers.edu/centers/institute-families/office-child-welfare-initiatives/new-jersey-child-welfare-training-partnership>

## A Professional Center for Learning and Gathering

Pre-service training courses and many professional development offerings are held at the NJ DCF Professional Center, a 107,000 square-foot building, located at 30 Van Dyke Avenue in New Brunswick. The Professional Center is situated in the center of the state with regard to population distribution, which makes it more easily accessible to the many thousands who use it each year. The DCF Professional Center has a variety of resources to support training and conferences: two auditoriums, two computer labs, two large meeting rooms (65+), two small meeting rooms, eleven classrooms, one CPR room, one car seat training room, three rooms for simulation trainings, two courtrooms, and a café operated by the NJ Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

## University-Agency Training Partnership

The New Jersey Child Welfare Training Partnership (NJCWTP) formed in 2007 to provide professional development to the DCF workforce. The Partnership is a successful collaboration between the OTPD, the Institute for Families (IFF) at Rutgers University's School of Social Work, and Stockton University's Child Welfare Education Institute. The initial focus of the Partnership's training was to implement change in the State's culture of child welfare practice. This approach supported movement from a case management service delivery model to the current strengths-based, family-centered, child-focused model of practice. The Partnership evolved into a large-scale workforce development approach improving and enhancing case practice for more than 5,000 child welfare professionals supporting the protection, permanency, and well-being of children and families across New Jersey.

NJCWTP is charged with the development and delivery of educational trainings that enhance case practice and planning with children and their families. Classroom and online courses meet the critical needs of the workforce. Specialized topics on issues influencing the safety and well-being of children—including domestic violence, child sexual abuse, substance abuse, and mental illness—are a major emphasis. At present, there are nearly two hundred courses in the course catalog.<sup>14</sup> The Partnership continues to develop specific courses to support learning and improve the knowledge and skills required for targeted practice outcomes as described in the report sections that follow.

The Partnership is committed to offering coursework as a means of raising the cultural competence of staff members. Courses that focus on increasing cultural competency include: *Working with Immigrant Families*, *Celebrating Culture: Working with Latino Families*, *Working with South Asian Families*, and *Working with Arab-Americans and Muslim Families*. Special attention is also given to infuse culturally relevant content into all coursework.

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<sup>14</sup> See the full course catalogue at <https://socialwork.rutgers.edu/centers/institute-families/office-child-welfare-initiatives/new-jersey-child-welfare-training-partnership>

## Certificate Programs and Continuing Education Credit

NJ DCF has also invested in specialized professional development opportunities for staff, including the following:

- Adoption Certificate
- Master Supervisor Certificate
- Violence Against Women Certificate Program (VAWC)
- Newly developing Substance Use Disorders Certificate Program set to launch in FY18

Almost all /courses offered by the NJ DCF and NJCWTP are approved and recognized by the New Jersey State Board of Social Work Examiners to offer Continuing Education Units for licensure and certification renewal.

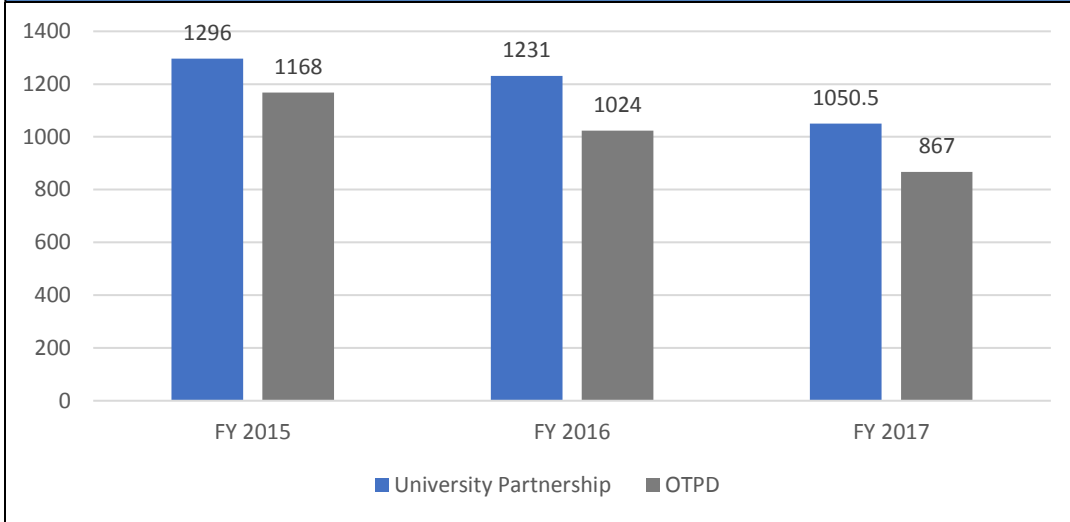
## A Highly Trained Workforce at All Levels

In FY2017, caseload-carrying (CLC) staff and their supervisors (Field Office Supervisors of Intake, Permanency, or Adoption Units and workers assigned to Intake, Permanency, or Adoption Units) received *nearly a quarter of a million hours of training (233,905 hours)*. All of DCF's CLC staff and their supervisors received at least 40 hours of annual training. About half (1,846 or 49.8%) completed more than 40 hours, 17.8% (661) completed at least double or more hours of training required (80+ hours of training). Table 14 demonstrates the training hours completed in FY2017 distinguished by the professional title.

TABLE 14: AVERAGE FY17 TRAINING HOURS BY POSITION TITLE	
AO/LO Team Lead	45
Area Director	47
Local Office Manager	58
Case Practice Specialist	59
Case Work Supervisor	55
Supervisor	51
Worker	68

Training courses are provided through a collaboration between the Office of Training and Professional Development and university partners at Rutgers School of Social Work and Stockton University. A breakdown of the total number of training days provided in fiscal year 2017 is portrayed in table 3.

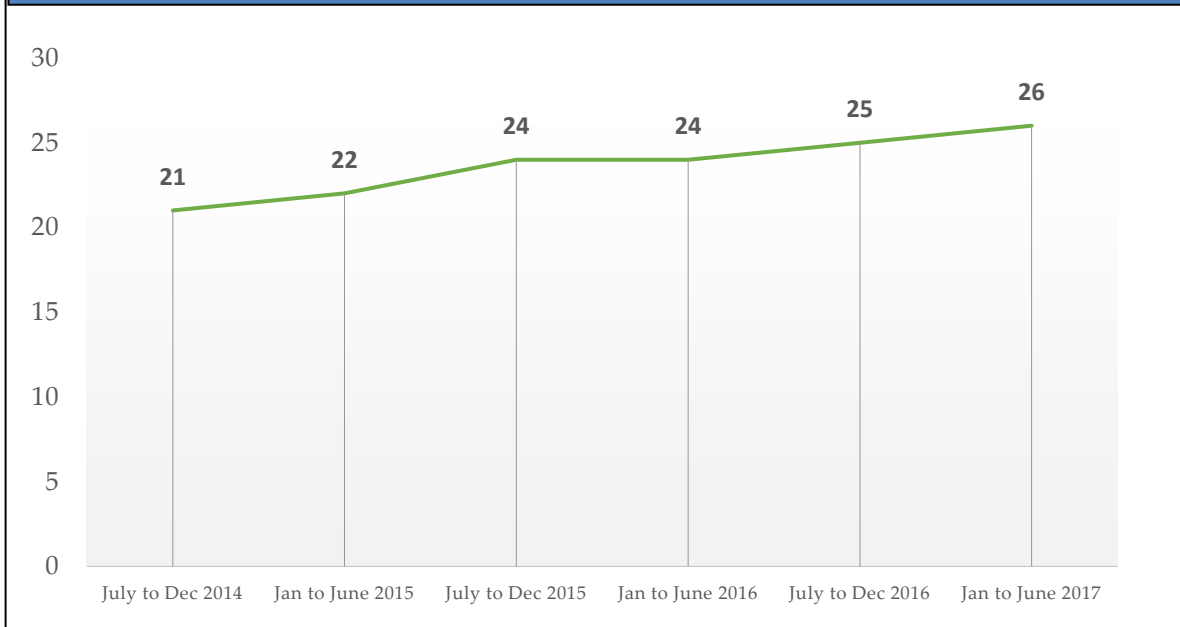
**FIGURE 3: NUMBER OF TRAINING DAYS BY PROVIDER**



### Demonstrated Knowledge Gain

Available pre/posttest data from 2014-2017 demonstrate an *increase in average knowledge gain over time*. In the first half of 2014, across all tests, there was an average 21% increase from pre to posttest. In the last half of FY2017, there was an average 26% increase from pre to posttest (January to June 2017). This may be attributed to the efforts by the Partnership in strengthening test questions to more accurately assess trainee knowledge before and after the training. Figure 4 illustrates this increasing trend.

**FIGURE 4: AVERAGE KNOWLEDGE INCREASE FROM PRE TO POSTTEST**



## Targeted Education to Improve Practice Outcomes

### Youth Thrive Training

DCF is committed to achieving permanency for older children in care and to supporting youth as they transition into independence. Adolescents have unique development needs to be considered as child welfare professionals consider their placement and the supportive services around them.

NJCWTP developed a 3-day training for the workforce based on the Youth Thrive framework to help mitigate risks to adolescent health development and promote overall wellness. This education is co-facilitated by two professional trainers, one who has lived experienced under the care of the child welfare system. The training highlights how promotive and protective factors are important for all youth as they develop characteristics associated with healthy adolescent development and well-being.

In FY2017, Youth Thrive was delivered to more than 2400 professionals across New Jersey. Incorporating these factors into day-to-day practice allows workers to not only look at safety and risk exclusively, but to round out their work with adolescents to consider how to best support their overall development and well-being, preparing them to transition to independence. Workers are given opportunities for self-reflection in order to develop a practice that utilizes the Youth Thrive framework in their daily work.

*These efforts to educate workers are in alignment with the Sustainability and Exit Plan's focus on strengthening case management services for children aged 18-21 who have not achieved permanency. They also help youth who are exiting care connect with services to support their independence.*

### FEEDBACK FROM YOUTH THRIVE PARTICIPANTS

“Really enjoyed training. Can use what I learned when working with youth on my caseload. The material was relevant to what we do, we can use info when working with youth but also when working with resource parents and bio-parents”

“Learned a lot about adolescents and their behavior. Will now constantly ask them what they think, and what do they want, would listen more and seek more to understand.”

“Great insight on adolescent care and how past trauma effect their decision making process. It was great to have a young adult who went through the foster care system to share her experiences.”

“The trainings was very well organized, inspirational, and gave me various perceptions on how to better approach youth in the field. I learned so many more components within my work which I will utilize. It was very moving and I enjoyed that the spokesperson shared their personal story and relate so much with his experience.”

## First Responders in Child Welfare Training

NJCWTP also began implementation of a newly developed training around the investigation of child abuse and neglect reports. The 6-day course prepares professionals to confidently and competently conduct and finalize investigations. The training explores the role of the first responder in utilizing tools to assess safety, identifying risk and caregiver strengths and needs, and conducting interviews to inform the investigation. Training considerations include domestic violence, mental health and substance use as co-occurring, cultural awareness, investigative policy, and connections with resource families.

*Efforts to reinforce strong Intake and "First Responder" practices through the training is supportive of SEP priorities focused on reinforcing the timeliness and quality of investigations conducted by Intake Workers.*

## CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

NJ DCF hosts many professional development conferences and day-long intensive trainings throughout the year as means to raise education and skills of the DCF workforce and their targeted outcomes for children and families. During the 2016-2017 year, these events, including the Adolescent Networking Conference, Family Success Conference, Child Protection Skill Building Conference, Statewide Fatherhood Forum, and Annual Forensic Summit.

### Adolescent Networking Conference

In its continued commitment to supporting the well-being of adolescents and the permanency of older youth in care, NJ DCF worked with the Institute for Families to host a free statewide Adolescent Networking Conference on April 27, 2017 at the NJ DCF Professional Center in New Brunswick entitled "Unique and United." The conference focused on inclusivity and diversity to promote successful and sustainable relationships between youth involved in the child welfare system and the adults that serve them. The conference provided information and training on tools and resources to help specific youth populations, and vulnerable youth in general, successfully transition into adulthood. Conference guests included DCF staff, child welfare professionals, resource parents, and young leaders (ages 14-23). 275 people attended, including 109 DCF employees.

### FEEDBACK FROM FIRST RESPONDERS TRAINING PARTICIPANTS

"I feel that I will be prepared and more confident when I conduct interviews and will have success in determining if an allegation is factual."

"The training was clear, concise, and full of critical and crucial information needed to execute the job and its functions."

"Was putting this training off for years because I did not want to go to intake, but it is really one of the most helpful trainings I have had. Can't believe how much I didn't know. It will certainly help moving forward."

"The trainer's knowledge on the topics was excellent and very eye-opening to me. I learned so many new useful techniques even after being on this job for 10 years. I cannot compliment this trainer enough!"



### ADOLESCENT NETWORK CONFERENCE 2017: WORKSHOP TITLES

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suicide Prevention Kit</li> <li>• Creative Therapies with Adolescents: When Talking Isn't Enough</li> <li>• Creating Opportunities for Children to Teach Caregivers Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Skills</li> <li>• Believe the Hype! Hip Hop for Youth Engagement and Empowerment</li> <li>• Connection is Protection: Using Social Supports to Create Stability for Traumatized Youth and Families</li> <li>• Enhancing Protective Factors for Transgender Youth</li> <li>• The Needs of American Muslim Youth</li> <li>• How to Empower and Impact Urban Youth</li> <li>• Impacting Courts and Communities: An In-Depth Look at the Youth Court Process</li> <li>• DRUMBEAT: Discovering Relationships Using Music Beliefs, Emotions, Attitudes, Thoughts</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fostering Resilience in Adolescents Coping with Loss</li> <li>• Understanding Adolescent Incarceration and Seeking Alternatives</li> <li>• Substance Use: Current Trends, Warning Signs, and Engagement Techniques</li> <li>• Explaining Domestic and Sexual Violence to LGBTQI and Youth</li> <li>• Utilizing Creative Skills Development to Support Coping Mechanisms and Esteem Building</li> <li>• Philadelphia Foster Youth Break the Silence: Where Storytelling Meets Advocacy</li> <li>• Don't Fall Off the Cliff! Helping Students Transition to Adulthood</li> <li>• Understanding the Usefulness and Purpose of Anger and Effects on Social Capital</li> <li>• Enhancing Protective Factors for Transgender Youth</li> </ul> |
|--|--|

### 10th Annual Family Success Center Conference

The NJ Family Success Centers celebrated a decade of excellence on June 22, 2017 at their annual conference entitled, *Engaging Neighborhoods, Strengthening Families, Creating Successful Communities*. The conference was held at the Professional Center in New Brunswick. This free conference included networking opportunities, keynote presentations and workshops to enhance professional development and family success.

### FAMILY SUCCESS CENTER 2017 CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cross-Sector Collaboration / Collective</li> <li>• Impact / Leveraged Resources</li> <li>• The FSC Practice Profile: Where We've Been and Where We're Going</li> <li>• Strengthening Outcomes by Developing Two-Generation Approaches to Building Family</li> <li>• Economic Security and Well-Being</li> <li>• Community Engagement and Professional Boundaries</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marketing Your Family Success Center</li> <li>• Emergency Preparedness: What You Can Do To Protect Yourself &amp; Your Family</li> <li>• Assisting Undocumented Families</li> <li>• Taking the LEAP: Integrating Fatherhood and Community Engagement within the Family Success Center Movement</li> <li>• Protecting Your Family From Substance Use</li> <li>• Embedding Protective Factors into the FSC's</li> </ul> |
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## Child Protection Skill-Building Conference

The Digital Realm of Child Abuse offered day-long skill building that examined child abuse images, the victims and their families, roles of law enforcement, perpetrators, trauma, and how to respond. The day was broken up into 4 sessions, including a closing panel discussion addressing “*Safeguarding Kids: What You Need to Know and Do.*” This was a free event which occurred on September 9, 2017 in Edison, NJ.

### DIGITAL REALM OF CHILD ABUSE CONFERENCE SESSIONS

- Child Abuse Images and the Law
- The Path of Child Sex Abuse Images: From Victimization to Restitution
- What Child Welfare Professionals Need to Know and Do
- Panel: Safe Guarding Kids: What You Need to Know and Do

## Statewide Fatherhood Forum

On December 7, 2016, DCF hosted the fourth annual Statewide Fatherhood Forum at the Professional Center in New Brunswick. This free event featured speakers, workshops, and resources related to responsible fatherhood and parenting. Relevant information for fathers, families, and human services providers was discussed in order to celebrate fatherhood.

## Annual Forensic Evaluation Summit

In effort to improve the quality and workforce comprehension and application of mental health evaluation tools and promote advances in knowledge, policy and practice within the field of child abuse and neglect forensic evaluation and treatment, DCF and the Institute for Families hosted a Forensic Evaluation Summit on March 15, 2017. The event drew close to 150 DCF-contracted psychologists and other stakeholders to promote advances in knowledge, policy and practice within the field of child abuse and neglect forensic evaluation and treatment. The Summit focused on disseminating the findings of a utilization study, and integrating cultural competency into evaluations. The Summit included a panel presentation with New Jersey experts on Integrating Substance Abuse Information into Forensic Maltreatment Evaluation while local experts provided workshops on a range of topics. Both events were well attended by forensic evaluators and DCF staff.

## Conference Attendance by DCF Staff

DCF staff are encouraged to attend relevant professional development conferences to further support them in their work. Staff have attended and presented at the following conferences in New Jersey and throughout the country in FY17.

## **A SAMPLING OF CONFERENCES ATTENDED BY DCF PROFESSIONALS**

ADA and FMLA Compliance Update, National Employment Law Institute  
Capacity Building Center for Courts for Court Improvement Programs, Washington, D.C.  
Children in Court Education Conference, New Jersey Judiciary  
Convening on Child Welfare and Homelessness  
International Personnel Management Association Leadership Conference, Cleveland  
International Public Management for Human Resources Conferences and Trainings  
Juvenile Sex Trafficking Conference Series (JuST), Washington, DC, and Arizona  
Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative Conference: School to Prison Pipeline  
Labor and Employment Law, Labor Arbitration Institute  
National Association for the Education of Homeless Youth  
National Association of Social Workers NJ Chapter Annual Conference  
National Employment Law Institute American's with Disabilities Act Workshop  
National Human Services Data Consortium  
National Quality Improvement Center for Adoption and Guardian Support Annual Meeting, Virginia  
NJ Child Placement and Advisory Council Annual Training  
NJ Task Force Faith Based Summit  
North American Council for Adoption, Nashville, Tennessee  
Office of the Attorney General's 7th Annual Trafficking Awareness Event  
Professional Advisory Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse & Conference  
Public Sector EEO and Employment Law Update, National Employment Law Institute  
Statewide Adolescent Networking Conference  
Statewide Homeless Education Conference  
Transformative Coaching Experience, Missouri  
Understanding, Managing, and Preventing Suicide in Trauma Survivors  
Working Together for Working Families Conference

## **DCF PROFESSIONALS PRESENTED AT THE FOLLOWING CONFERENCES**

Administration for Children and Families' Independent Living Coordinator Conference  
2017 AEA Conference: Forward Thinkers in Foster Care Adoption, Las Vegas, Nevada  
Children in Court, Annual Judicial Conference, New Jersey  
Children's Bureau's 20th National Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect  
Coalition for Juvenile Justice Conference  
Convening on Child Welfare and Homelessness  
Corporation for Supportive Housing  
Foster and Adoptive Family Services Recognition Brunch  
Garden State Employment Association Conference  
Let's Talk Adoption Conference, Rutgers University  
National Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect Conference, Washington, D.C.  
NJ Continuum of Care Convening  
NJ Governor's Conference on Housing and Economic Development  
NJ-CARES and QIC-AG Year in Review, Annual All Staff Meeting, New Jersey  
Resiliency for Resource Families Kickoff  
School Social Workers Conference  
Third Edition of Best Practices in Ending Homelessness Panel  
Union County Youth Services Networking Conference

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# SUPERVISION AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Large caseloads and excessive workloads pose challenges for child welfare staff to effectively serve children and families. Large caseloads lead to burnout (Kim & Kao, 2014) and turnover (Gonzalez, Faller, Ortega, & Tropman, 2009). A decreased caseload has a positive impact on a worker's ability to engage families, deliver improved services, and their overall retention – all which lead to long-term improved outcomes for children and families (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2016).

NJ DCF performance in this area is exceptional. Caseload standards for intake, permanency and adoption permanency caseworkers (100%) and more than nine out of ten intake and adoption caseworkers (97-99%) have caseloads that meet standards as well: Table 15 provides details on functional caseload compliance across staff functions.

New Jersey's Sustainability and Exit Plan sets a benchmark that limits Intake Worker caseloads to 12 open cases and eight new assignments per month. Between January 1 and June 30, 2016, this standard was met for the first time since the beginning state reform efforts. The Center for the Study of Social Policy, in its latest monitoring report<sup>15</sup>, states that "DCF leadership and staff have worked hard over many years to accomplish this notable achievement."

## Caseload Standards and Supervisory Ratios

NJ DCF set caseload standards to align with national standards, such as the Child Welfare League of America's caseload standards for intake, permanency, and adoption caseworkers. These caseload standards were designed to ensure reasonable workloads so that staff have the time needed to develop relationships that offer the capacity to create change and provide effective services to children, youth, and their caregivers. NJ DCF also used the national standard for effective supervisory ratios to ensure that staff ratios across the agency allow supervisors the time to be available and engaged with their staff teams (see Figure 4).

## Impact Teams

DCF developed Impact Teams, consisting of a supervisor and three workers, assigned to a unit or an office wherever intakes are unusually high. Each of the area offices have an impact team to assist in maintaining caseload standards by taking any overflow of investigations. Impact teams offer the flexibility to quickly respond to new referrals and assume caseloads from staff who have taken emergency leave, thus ensuring there is no break in service for the children and families.

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<sup>15</sup> <https://www.cssp.org/publications/child-welfare/new-jersey-charlie-and-nadine-h-v-christie/document/Charlie-and-Nadine-H.-v.-Christie-Monitoring-Report-XIX-July-19-2017.pdf>

**TABLE 15: CASELOAD STANDARDS ACROSS DCF**

CLC Staff	Function	Aligned with CWLA & Other National Standards	NJ DCF Exit & Sustainability Plan Benchmark	Caseloads meeting standard (as of June 2014)	Caseloads meeting standard (as of June 2015)	Caseloads meeting standard (as of June 2016)	Caseloads meeting standard (as of Dec. 2016)
Intake	Respond to community concerns regarding child safety and well-being. Specifically, receive referrals from the State Central Registry (SCR) and depending on the nature of the referral, respond between two hours and five days with a visit to the home and begin investigation or assessment. Complete investigation or assessment within 60 days.	No more than 8 new intakes in the month, no more than 12 primary families and no more than a total 14 families	90% target	85%	89%	93%	95%
Permanency	Provide services to families whose children remain at home under the protective supervision of CP&P and those families whose children are removed from home due to safety concerns.	No more than 15 families and 10 children in placement	95% target	96%	99%	100%	100%
Adoption	Find permanent homes for children who cannot safely return to their parents by preparing children for adoption, developing adoptive resources and performing the work needed to finalize adoptions	No more than 15 children	95% target	83%	90%	94%	97%

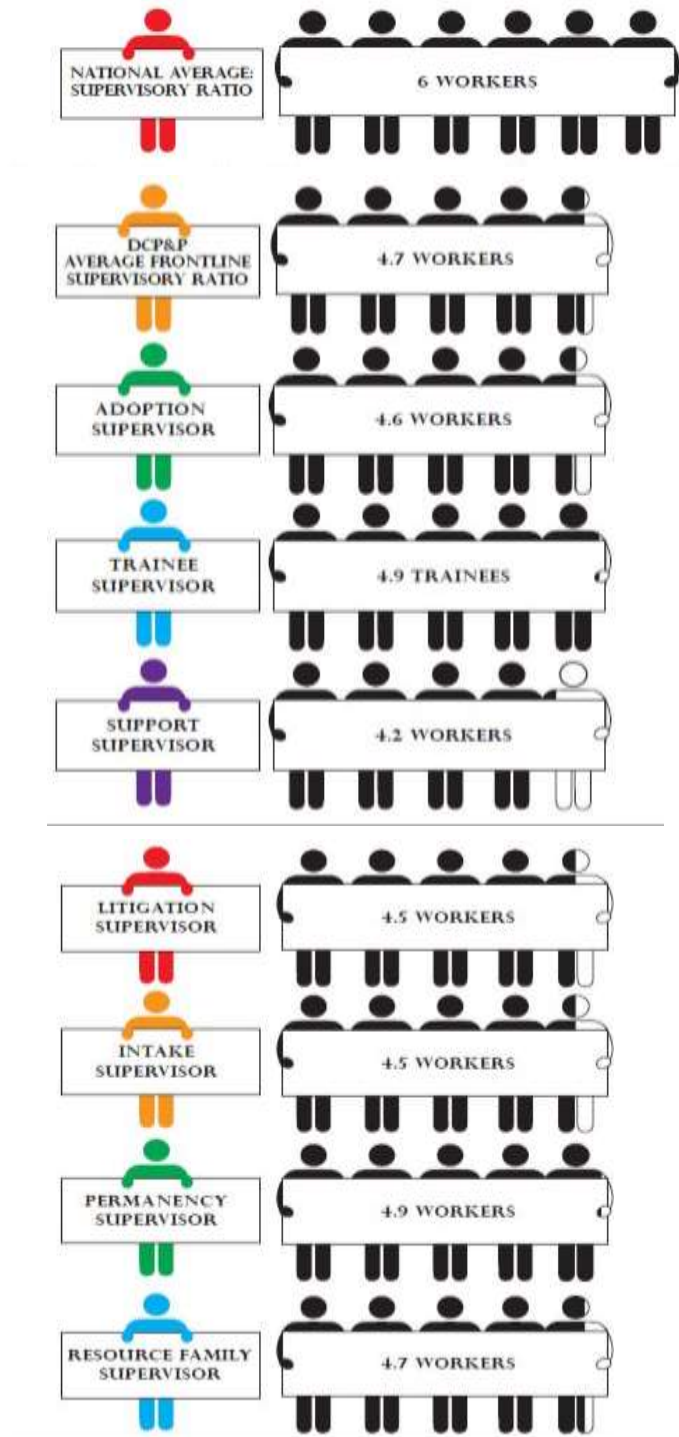
## A Well-Supervised Workforce

Research shows that effective supervision –which includes timely performance feedback, employee-supervisor trust, working toward the same goals, and teamwork—has an impact on increased self-efficacy, the quality of worker practice, improved outcomes for children and families (Collins-Camargo & Royse, 2010) and retention (Johnco, Salloum, Olson, & Edwards, 2014).

According to the Child Welfare League of America (2012), having knowledgeable supervisors as a guide for workers to do their job efficiently is the most promising work support. Supervisory ratios—the number of staff assigned to a single supervisor—reflect an organization’s commitment to high-quality practice and provision of the resources needed to support the supervisor-staff relationship, and workforce well-being. National survey results reflect average ratios of 1:6 (APHSA, 2005).

*As figure 5 shows, NJ DCF supervisors are responsible for an average of 4.66 frontline caseworkers across all areas. This reflects DCF’s commitment to effective support and oversight of all of its staff on the frontlines.*

**FIGURE 5: NUMBER OF CASEWORKERS PER FRONTLINE SUPERVISOR (AS OF JUNE 2016)**



## A Commitment to Continuous Quality Improvement

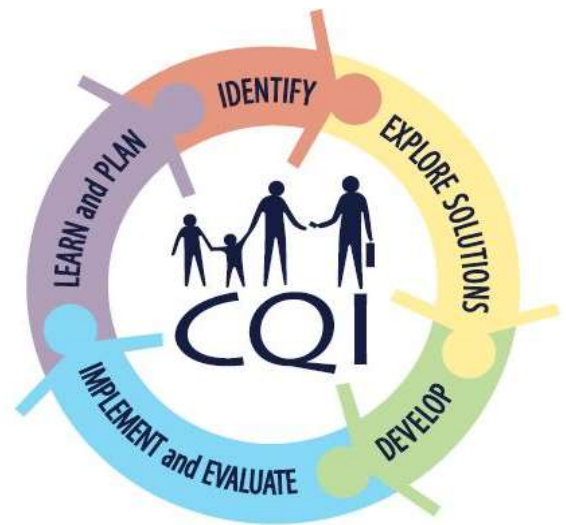
In its 2014–2016 Strategic Plan, DCF emphasized its commitment to enhance processes for continuous quality improvement (CQI). NJ DCF implemented a CQI Review process that included the development of a CQI Workgroup. The underlying principle at the core of DCF's CQI activities is the understanding that DCF's work should be informed by systematic processes that ensure quality implementation of its services. As a result, DCF has adopted a CQI approach rooted in a scientific reasoning framework. The framework's purpose is to advance a way of thinking about DCF's practices, systems, and processes.

The goals of NJ DCF's CQI framework<sup>16</sup> are as follows:

- Create a continuous learning environment for the purpose of improving future outcomes.
- Ensure sustainability of NJ DCF's Case Practice Model and reform efforts.
- Improve agency processes, procedures, and quality of services by consistently using data to guide fiscal and programmatic decision-making.
- Sustain and enhance NJ DCF's ability to self-monitor.

Steps taken to implement this new vision of CQI during fiscal year 2017 include the following:

- Implementing a CQI Steering Committee to enhance NJDCF's administrative structure and strengthen oversight
- Implementing a formal information-sharing strategy for CQI and ensuring that designated staff members are prepared to support the system
- Providing CQI training to ensure that all staff understand the department's expectations and are prepared to participate in the CQI process on an ongoing basis
- Continuing to ensure data quality by implementing additional processes for identifying or addressing data quality issues
- Promoting the integration of NJ DCF's CQI framework by providing technical assistance to support internal evaluation of statewide and local CQI activities outlined in the program improvement process
- Continuing to focus on analysis and dissemination of performance data
- Establishing an annual CQI summit to review the implementation of the CQI system with diverse stakeholders and to share important lessons learned across CQI activities



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<sup>16</sup> <http://www.nj.gov/dcf/about/divisions/opma/cqi.html>.

## Quality Reviews

DCF uses a process of Quality Reviews (QRs) to establish accountability for alignment with its Case Practice Model, and for consistent progress in everyday work with families. Through the QR process, trained review teams of two persons – including DCF staff at various levels and community stakeholders – review NJ DCF CP&P records and interview many people involved with the children and families served by DCF. This process is completed for children who are cared for in both in-home and out-of-home placement.

Family cases from each county are reviewed once every two years to allow for a robust and well supported performance improvement process. At the conclusion of each review, DCF's Office of Performance Management and Accountability (OPMA) works with each area, through its Office of Quality, to develop short-term and long-term goals to strengthen practice, resulting in a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP). The Office of Quality reviews each PIP, aggregates results, and shares it with leaders across DCF's divisions. Findings from the QRs are incorporated into existing training and supervisory tools and used to identify systemic opportunities for improvement.

QR ratings demonstrate how children and families served by DCF are rated according to key review measures related to the following key performance areas learning and development; physical health of the child; safety and living arrangement; family and community connections with siblings; assessment and understanding with resource families; provision of healthcare services; teamwork and coordination; case planning; plan implementation; and overall long-term view.

## ChildStat

*ChildStat* is designed to encourage a culture of learning through self-reflective and self-diagnostic processes.<sup>17</sup> ChildStat uses a case conferencing model where one case is utilized to critically analyze practice, policy, and procedures from a systems perspective. This process can help identify the steps that can be taken to enhance practice with the case presented and within the Local Office. In addition, it helps identify critical decision-making elements and themes statewide.

After the NJ DCF OPMA selects a case, the individual case and data are provided to the Area Director and the LOM (two weeks before to the ChildStat presentation). Next, the caseworker, supervisor, and other relevant staff and community partners develop and deliver a presentation on the quality of the practice and the services offered to the family. Following the presentations, the Area Director, LOM, and select staff from the Local Office have an

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<sup>17</sup> See <http://www.nj.gov/dcf/about/divisions/opma>.



opportunity to debrief. These sessions are co-facilitated by OPMA and DCP&P leadership to discuss themes, next steps, and their overall sense of the process. This is an opportunity to review the questions and comments from the participants invited to the public presentation, extend the learning, and discuss issues in a smaller, less formal setting. After the local office has presented at ChildStat, the office leaders share the presentation in their office(s) so that staff have an opportunity to review and reflect on it.

In October 2016, the OPMA modified the ChildStat format slightly by adding a round table discussion period to support group learning. The round table discussion invites the audience to participate in small groups to answer questions developed by the presenting local office and the OPMA. The audience reconvenes to discuss the questions and lessons learned from the case analysis. When appropriate, the OPMA calls on experts to provide additional information related to the questions.

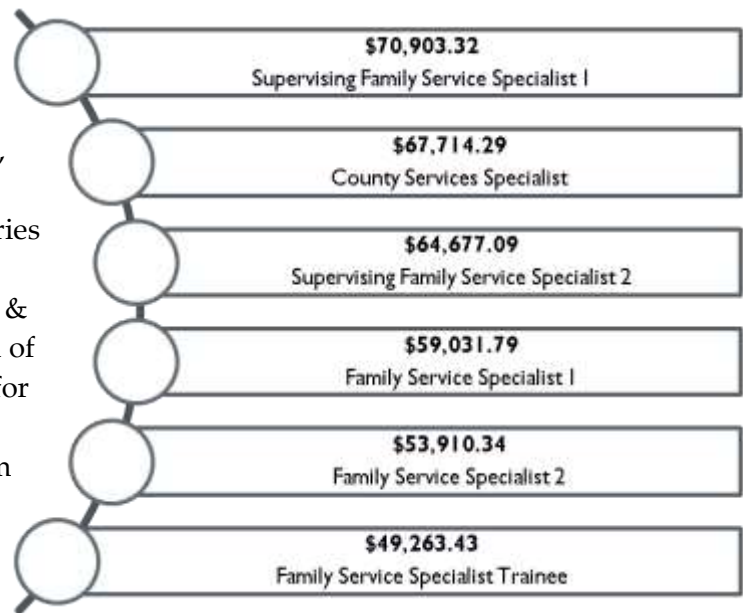
Six months following an office's presentation, an update is completed in the area or local office with a representative of the OPMA and leadership of that area and office. This update focuses on lessons to improve case practice.

# INCENTIVES AND WORK CONDITIONS

## An Adequately Compensated Workforce

Compensation that matches the workload and responsibilities of a child welfare professional is important to staff well-being and retention (Johnco, Salloum, Olson, & Edwards, 2014). Nationwide, average child welfare/protection staff salaries range from \$30,000 to \$49,999 per year (NCWWI, 2011; Dolan, Smith, Casanueva, & Ringeisen, 2011). According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2016), the average salary for all social workers in the United States was \$46,890. DCF's starting salaries range from \$49,263 to \$70,903, well above the national averages.

**FIGURE 6: NJ DCF STARTING SALARIES**



## Benefit Packages for NJ DCF Employees

NJ DCF provides staff with a comprehensive benefits package. The average starting package includes 12 vacation days, 15 sick days, 3 administrative leave days, 12 paid holidays, a portfolio of health and dental benefit plan options, prescription drug benefits, vision care, retirement plan options, life insurance, deferred compensation plan, and paid leave for annual military training. In addition, the state's Employee Discount Program offers discounts for movie passes, sporting events, Broadway shows, and other items through the state's Employee Discount Program.

Throughout the 2017 fiscal year, the agency took steps toward equipping staff with smart phones. This communication tool enhanced the level of access and safety for DCF's professionals, particularly for frontline workers.

## Annual Performance Reviews

Employee Performance Reviews are conducted annually. They are used as a tool for building competencies and are informed by relevant elements of the NJ DCF Strategic Plan to ensure performance and investment in the agency's core priority areas.

## Worker Safety and Secondary Trauma

NJ DCF has instituted a safety committee to discuss issues and create recommendations for action. In 2015, a two-day course, *Safety Awareness for the Child Welfare Professional*, was developed and implemented by the NJCWTP. The class covers preventive measures, de-escalation techniques, and response to situations of imminent danger. This two-day safety class was introduced as a voluntary offering, but, given its popularity and the widespread recognition of its value for staff, it became a mandatory course for caseload-carrying DCP&P staff. In fiscal year 2017, it became the third class scheduled for new workers after Orientation and Car Seat Safety. During the report period, the NJCWTP facilitated the course 64 times for approximately 1,400 trainees.

## Worker2Worker

NJ DCF's "Worker2Worker" is a *confidential peer-counseling support helpline* for Division of Child Protection and Permanency employees to help manage the unique stresses of their jobs at NJ DCF DCP&P. *Worker2Worker* is a 7-day-a-week helpline coordinated by Rutgers University Behavioral Health Care and staffed by former DCP&P supervisors and caseworkers.<sup>18</sup> The helpline features a nationally recognized best practice model of peer support entitled "Reciprocal Peer Support," clinical care telephone assessments, resilience-building events, a network of referral/treatment services, and psychological first aid with crisis response services after traumatic events.



In the three years previous to this reporting period, Worker2Worker successfully delivered and expanded this support to reach more than 11,000 contacts. As a result of targeted awareness campaigns and ongoing encouragement from NJ DCF leaders to utilize the resource to support professional well-being, the department was successful in significantly raising utilization of this resource during fiscal year 2017. In the last year, there were more than 5,300 support calls and 1,700 direct contacts exchanged through Worker2Worker.

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<sup>18</sup> See the Worker2Worker "Stand By Me" video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NKCHiii9cSA>

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## ORGANIZATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

NJ DCF promotes the essential tenets of a learning organization throughout all activities and programs. NJ DCF uses data and outcome measures to inform decision-making and to support the culture of a learning organization that is self-analyzing and self-correcting. NJ DCF applies solution oriented problem solving to identify and analyze strengths and areas needing improvement, and then to evaluate, implement, provide feedback, learn from, and resolve issues in a way that improves the quality of services.

### Tenth Anniversary Celebration

NJ DCF celebrated ten years of service to children and families throughout the state during this reporting period. The department was created on July 1, 2006, to better focus the state's efforts to improve the lives of children and families. NJ DCF underwent a transformation, fundamentally reforming its culture and work throughout the decade. As part of the celebration, department employees were inspired to conduct community service projects around the state, furthering NJDCF's commitment to support local communities.



### Internal Caseload Review

As part of its commitment to continuous quality improvement, DCF piloted an internal caseload verification review with Intake workers in November 2016. This quality assurance method documents how workers' reported caseloads compare with their caseloads as reported in Safe Measures. This practice also serves as a learning opportunity to identify areas for strengthened practice and training attention. The pilot process led to statewide implementation of the caseload verification in the winter of 2017.

### Resource Family Commitments

In 2016, DCF's Resource Family Retention Task Force outlined recommendations and action steps in order to foster a culture shift that would improve the experiences of New Jersey's resource families and the outcomes for all children in care. This shift included focused efforts in professional staff development, management practices, direct supports to resource families, CQI measures, and policy changes. Several workforce initiatives reflect the prioritization of these recommendations to enhance relationships between intake and permanency units and their resource family unit colleagues, as well as relationships between all units and with resource families.

In 2016, DCF introduced the first edition of the *Team From The Start, We All Play A Part*, quarterly newsletter to provide the workforce with useful information on resource family care and bridge connections between NJ DCF CP&P functions. DCF staff celebrated Mother's Day and Father's Day by recognizing outstanding resource parents with hand-delivered gift baskets.

DCF professionals were also offered the opportunity to nominate outstanding resource parents for recognition in the following areas: caring for a sibling group; caring for a child with an advanced medical need; caring for an adolescent; longest serving resource parent; and demonstrating advocacy and partnership with a biological family. In addition, staff sent all resource families are sent greeting cards during the winter holidays, on Mother's Day, and on Father's Day.

### **Employee Recognition Events**

The agency has instituted an annual department-wide employee recognition event. Staff and their families are invited, framed certificates are provided, photographs are taken, and awards are given for teamwork and other achievements. The awards are based on nominations solicited from staff:

*"The Employee Recognition Awards Program is an opportunity for us to recognize and acknowledge co-workers and/or supervisors/managers for their dedication in providing a positive impact in our lives and those we serve. This is the time to nominate that co-worker that inspires you, to recognize a unit or office that has demonstrated and worked as a team, or acknowledge the employees who excel in providing exceptional customer service. Let a co-worker, supervisor or manager know that their hard work is noticed, appreciated and deserving of acknowledgment for the impact they have made."*

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## COMMUNITY CONTEXT

NJ DCF uses several strategies to foster meaningful relationships with community partners, stakeholders, and the public. In addition, the agency launches a number of initiatives to support data-driven collaboration and accountability.

### Data Transparency

Both the Commissioner's Dashboard and the New Jersey Child Welfare Data Hub are designed to increase access to and use of child welfare data. The *Commissioner's Dashboard*<sup>19</sup> provides monthly reports on selected data indicators that help DCF and others better understand whom the agency is serving and how it is doing. The Commissioner's Dashboard reports help guide, track, and adjust agency efforts and provide information on meeting NJ DCF's progress toward identified benchmarks to a range of stakeholders and the general public.

The *New Jersey Child Welfare Data Hub*<sup>20</sup> was developed collaboratively by NJ DCF and IFF. Built upon the principles of transparency and accountability, the Data Hub seeks to improve the lives of children and families by making New Jersey child welfare data available to the public. There are two key components to the hub:

1. The *Data Map* allows users to explore key child welfare measures, population characteristics, and socioeconomic variables at the state and county level. The Data Map provides social and economic context, helping users explore the complex interaction between social environments and the children and families involved with New Jersey's child welfare system.
2. The *Data Portal* allows users to explore key indicators of child well-being through customizable visualization and query tools. After selecting a measure, users can select variables to gain further insight into the report. In addition, users can selectively filter the variables to retrieve unique data. The Data Portal section of the New Jersey Child Welfare Data Hub was officially launched in October 2016.

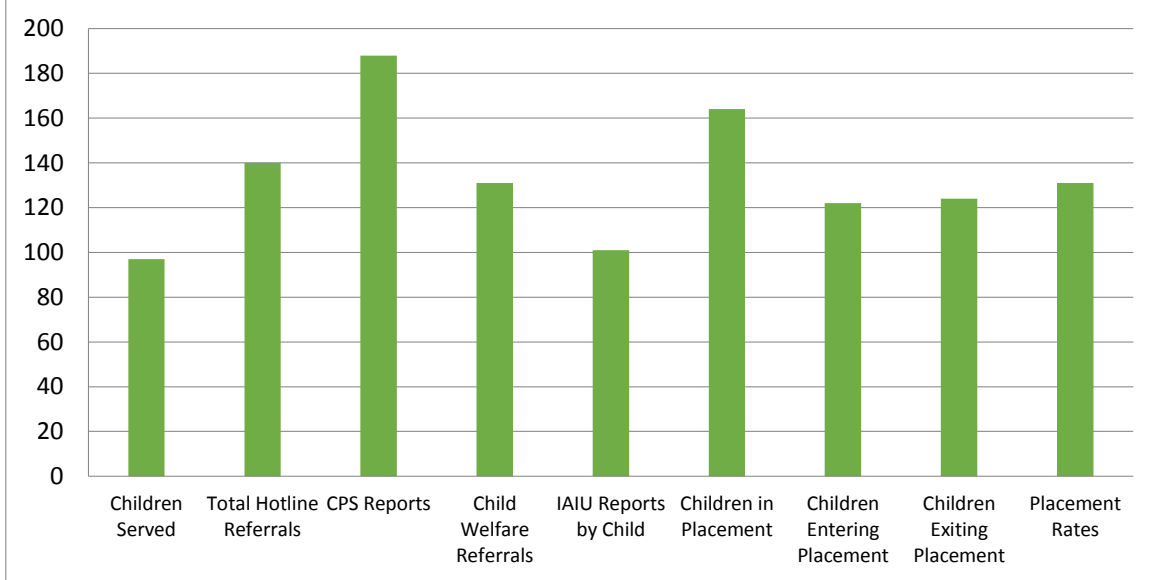
The data portal allows users to run up to 21 reports by selecting measures and key indicators. A selection of the reports and the total number of unique visitors between February 2017 and June 2017. CPS Reports had the highest number of unique visitors during this time period. Children served had the lowest number of unique visitors. The figure below shows that the reports had an average of 133 unique visitors during this time period.

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<sup>19</sup> See <http://www.nj.gov/dcf/childdata/continuous>

<sup>20</sup> See <https://njchilddata.rutgers.edu/>

**FIGURE 7: DATA PORTAL REPORT GENERATION (FEB 2017 TO JUNE 2017)**



### Defining Evidenced-Based Approaches

The New Jersey Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect studies and develops recommendations regarding the most effective means of improving the quality and scope of child protective and preventive services provided or supported by DCF. This 30-member task force is comprised of volunteer members who are broadly representative of the community (e.g., experience in child protection, law enforcement, and advocacy).

During fiscal year 2017, the Task Force worked to determine evidence-based practice that could be implemented with the children and families of New Jersey. Through a partnership with the



National Implementation Research Network (NIRN), DCF used the Hexagon Tool (Blase, Kiser, & Van Dyke, 2013) to guide the intervention selection. The Hexagon Tool guides the Task Force in the selection of evidence-based instructional, behavioral, and social-emotional innovations and prevention approaches by reviewing six broad factors in relation to the program or practice under consideration: (1) need in agency, community, state; (2) fit with current initiatives; (3) resources and supports available; (4) evidence (e.g., fidelity data, cost, outcomes); (5) readiness for replication, and (6) capacity to implement. Through the

selection and implementation of evidence based approaches, DCF strives to increase positive outcomes with the state’s children and families.

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# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: NJ DCF STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES & COMPETENCIES

NJ DCF Staff Responsibilities & Competencies		
Position Title	Responsibilities	Competencies
<b>Family Service Specialist Trainee</b>	<p>Performs the field work and office work to conduct varied types of investigations, including abuse and/or neglect referrals, in-home supervision, residential placement, foster care and Adoption Complaint Investigations (ACIs); collects, records and analyzes significant facts, draws conclusions and determines appropriate action.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of: the methods used to collect and analyze data.</li> <li>• Ability to: learn and apply modern social work theory, standards and methods; interpret and apply laws, rules, regulations and procedures to specific situations; work effectively with associates, families, individuals and groups; collect and analyze data, and evaluate the social relationships of individuals and families and take appropriate action; comprehend the problems of physically and/or emotionally maladjusted or dependent persons, or those confined in an institution; learn from an in-service training program; prepare accurate case histories and reports; act as a witness in court; prepare correspondence; remain calm and decisive in emergency situations; take and maintain a firm stand; make immediate and critical decisions based upon agency policy and perform judiciously under pressure; maintain records and files.</li> </ul>
<b>Family Service Specialist 2</b>	<p>Performs field and office work to: screen allegations of child abuse and/or neglect; initiate or conduct various types of investigations, including child welfare assessments or abuse and/or neglect referrals in problematic high-risk family situations, in-home supervision, residential placement, assessment, recruitment, and placement in resource family/foster homes, adoption-related work and placement supervision; manage various aspects of court-involved cases; refer families for services; facilitate Family Team Meetings; collect, record and analyze significant facts, draw conclusions and determine appropriate action.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of: the economic, social, emotional and other problems of abused and neglected family members; the signs of child abuse and neglect; the methods used to identify whether abuse or neglect has occurred; problems encountered in the investigation of child abuse referrals and other problematic family situations; counseling and interviewing techniques; the methods used to conduct investigations; the methods used to collect and analyze data; the types of community services and resources likely to be used by the client population served; assessment methods used to match a child to a Resource Family; the types of social service agencies likely to be of assistance in providing for the needs of those with social, emotional, psychological or behavioral problems.</li> <li>• Ability to: engage families in critical decision making and case planning; interpret and apply the Child Protective Services and child welfare policies and procedures; maintain client confidentiality including all documentation and information contained in the case record; interpret and apply laws, rules and regulations to specific situations; interact with the public in a professional manner; assess if it is necessary to place children in out-of-home settings; monitor the effectiveness and appropriateness of services provided to meet the needs of children and families; identify the need for other community resources and services, and make appropriate referrals; collect and analyze data and evaluate the social relationships of individuals and families and take appropriate action including providing services; conduct investigations of child abuse and child neglect under the direction of a supervisor; conduct safety assessments and prepare safety plans with supervisory consultation and guidance; identify risk factors through observation, interviews and collateral sources; conduct field visits</li> </ul>

## NJ DCF Staff Responsibilities & Competencies

Position Title	Responsibilities	Competencies
		<p><i>and/or studies; document all case-related activities; prepare case plans with families and appropriate interested parties; prepare case histories, records and reports; prepare clear, sound, accurate and complete reports of investigations containing findings, conclusions and recommendations; demonstrate strong writing and organizational skills; interview persons who may be emotionally upset or antagonistic, and obtain information needed for planning realistic goals for improved family and/or individual functioning; remain calm and decisive in emergency situations, make immediate and critical decisions based on agency policy and perform judiciously under pressure; lift, carry, position and secure children in car seats; act as witness in court, and prepare documents for court review.</i></p>
<p><b>Family Service Specialist I</b></p>	<p>Handles a caseload of families and performs field and office work to: initiate or conduct various types of investigations, including child welfare assessments or abuse and/or neglect referrals in problematic, high-risk situations, in-home supervision, residential placement; conduct assessment, recruitment, and placement in resource family/foster homes, adoption-related work and placement supervision; assist supervisory staff in developing, coordinating and facilitating social programs using sophisticated social work skills, including engagement, analysis, assessment group work and/or individualized therapeutic interaction with clients; assists in developing needed services, additional resources and training programs; provide direct treatment/counseling services, Family Team Meetings and referrals for family services to a high risk requiring intensive intervention; manage various aspects of court-involved cases.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of: economic, social, emotional and other problems of abused and neglected family members and of expected emotional and other reactions; problems encountered in the investigation of child abuse referrals and other problematic family situations; methods used to identify whether abuse or neglect has occurred; signs of child abuse and neglect; counseling and interviewing techniques; methods used to conduct investigations; methods used to collect and analyze data; community services and resources; assessment methods used to match children to Resource Families; types of social service agencies likely to be of assistance in providing for the needs of those with social, emotional, psychological or behavioral problems.</li> <li>• Ability to: interact with the public in a professional manner; interpret and apply the Child Protective Services and child welfare policies and procedures; maintain client confidentiality including all documentation, identifying and non-identifying information contained in the case record; interpret and apply laws, rules and regulations to specific situations; assess the signs for when it is necessary to place children in out-of-home settings; monitor the effectiveness and appropriateness of services provided to meet the needs of children and families; identify the need for other community resources and services, and make appropriate referrals; collect and analyze data and evaluate the social relationships of individuals and families and take appropriate action, including providing services; conduct investigations of child abuse and child neglect under the direction of a supervisor; conduct safety assessments and prepare safety plans; identify risk factors through observation, interviews and collateral sources; conduct field visits, studies and/or investigations; document all case-related activities; prepare case plans with families and appropriate interested parties; engage families in critical decision making and case planning; lift, carry, position and secure children in car seats; prepare case histories, records and reports; interview persons who may be emotionally upset and antagonistic, and obtain</li> </ul>

## NJ DCF Staff Responsibilities & Competencies

Position Title	Responsibilities	Competencies
		<p><i>information needed for planning realistic goals for family and/or individual functioning; remain calm and decisive in emergency situations, take and maintain a firm stand, make immediate and critical decisions based on agency policy and perform judiciously under pressure; oversee collection of basic social data and develop appropriate social and other plans for disturbed, disabled and/or delinquent children; provide consultation services in the broad field of social work; act as a witness in court, and prepare documents for court review; provide training to professional staff in counseling methods, techniques and procedures.</i></p>
<p><b>Supervising Family Service Specialist 2</b></p>	<p>Supervises the delivery of social and protective services; assists in administering office activities according to agency policy in personnel, budget, systems and training; coordinates service with other family and children's services providers and maintains positive relationships with concerned community groups and individuals; participates in the development of policy, procedures and standards.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of: types of social service agencies likely to be of assistance in providing for the needs of those with social, emotional, psychological or behavioral problems; economic, social, emotional and other problems of abused and neglected family members and of possible emotional or other reactions to be anticipated; problems encountered in the investigation of child abuse referrals and other problematic family situations; counseling and interviewing techniques; methods used to conduct investigations; methods used to collect and analyze data; signs of child abuse and neglect; community services and resources; assessment methods used to match children to Resource Families.</li> <li>• Ability to: interpret and apply Child Protective Services and child welfare policies and procedures; interpret and apply laws, rules and regulations to specific situations; supervise the collection of basic social data and develop appropriate social and other plans for children with a variety of emotional, mental, physical and social difficulties; represent the Department and participate in meetings and conferences; evaluate and review case plans and case recording; assign and instruct staff and supervise their work; assist in developing effective plans of action to address problems; monitor the effectiveness and appropriateness of services provided to meet the needs of children and families; plan, schedule and conduct staff conferences; supervise the delivery of social and protective services; conduct studies and surveys; prepare legal reports, affidavits and depositions; remain calm and decisive in emergency situations, make immediate and critical decisions based on agency policy, and perform judiciously under pressure; supervise the establishment and maintenance of records and files.</li> </ul>
<p><b>County Services Specialist</b></p>	<p>Implements and integrates the services of the division within the designated county (or counties) human services system, consisting of multiple public and private social service agencies and programs; attempts to maximize resources by networking and interacting with all social services in the county/community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of: types of social service programs likely to be needed by the client population served; social work theory; difficulties in the delivery mechanisms for social service programs.</li> <li>• Ability to: learn statewide contracting service procedures used by the various regional contract Administration units in order to communicate, expedite, enhance and recommend purchase of services using community-based resources; interpret and apply</li> </ul>

## NJ DCF Staff Responsibilities & Competencies

Position Title	Responsibilities	Competencies
		<p><i>New Jersey laws and the rules, regulations, policies, standards and procedures; plan, develop, coordinate and administer the conducting of surveys, studies and investigations applicable to the implementation of an integrated social service system; resolve administrative and other problems encountered in helping communities establish and maintain cooperative social service programming; prepare and supervise the preparation of clear and accurate reports; read and evaluate statistical reports; prepare correspondence; direct the establishment and maintenance of essential records and files.</i></p>
<p><b>Supervising Family Service Specialist I</b></p>	<p>Oversees the work of subordinate supervisory-level staff involved in the delivery of social and protective services; assists in administering office activities according to agency policy in personnel, budget, systems and training; coordinates service with other family and children's services providers and maintains positive relationships with other concerned community groups and individuals; participates in the development of policy, procedures and standards.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Knowledge of: types of social service agencies likely to be of assistance in providing for the needs of those with social, emotional, psychological or behavioral problems; economic, social, emotional and other problems of abused and neglected family members and of possible emotional or other reactions to be anticipated; problems encountered in the investigation of child abuse referrals and other problematic family situations; counseling and interview techniques; methods used to conduct investigations; methods used to collect and analyze data; signs of child abuse and neglect; case evaluation methods; community services and resources; assessment methods used to match children to Resource Families.</i></li> <li>• <i>Ability to: supervise the collection of basic social data and develop appropriate social and other plans for children with a variety of emotional, mental, physical and social difficulties; represent the Department and participate in meetings and conferences; review and evaluate case plans; supervise the delivery of social and protective services; conduct studies and surveys; interpret and apply Child Protective Services and child welfare policies and procedures; interpret and apply laws, rules and regulations; assign and instruct office staff and supervise their work; develop plans of action to address problems; monitor the effectiveness and appropriateness of services provided to meet the needs of children and families; plan, schedule and conduct staff conferences; remain calm and decisive in immediate emergency situations, make immediate and critical decisions based on agency policy, and perform judiciously under pressure; prepare and supervise the preparation of reports and correspondence; supervise the establishment and maintenance of records and files.</i></li> </ul>

## APPENDIX B: BCWEP AND MCWEP CORE COMPETENCIES

BCWEP Core Competencies	
Competency Area	Core Knowledge & Abilities
<b>Workplace Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates knowledge of the basic structure of DCP&amp;P and child welfare practice, including Title 30, Title 9, and Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997.</li> <li>• Understands the vision, values, mission, mandates and desired outcomes of the New Jersey Child Welfare System.</li> <li>• Is able to work productively with agency staff, supervisors, and clients in an environment characterized by human diversity.</li> <li>• Demonstrates an awareness of community resources available for children and families and have a working knowledge of how to utilize these resources in achieving case goals.</li> <li>• Has a working knowledge of collaboration with multidisciplinary teams and can work productively with team members in implementing case plans.</li> <li>• Is able to plan, prioritize, and complete activities within appropriate time frames.</li> <li>• Is aware of potential work-related stress factors and begin to develop appropriate self-care strategies.</li> </ul>
<b>Human Behavior in the Social environment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates understanding of the stages, processes, and milestones of physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development of children and young adults—and how it is determined and assessed.</li> <li>• Understands the profound negative impact of child maltreatment on children’s health and development.</li> <li>• Demonstrates understanding of the stages and processes of adult development and family life.</li> <li>• Demonstrates understanding of the potential effects of poverty, racism, sexism, homophobia, violence, and other forms of oppression on human behavior.</li> <li>• Demonstrates understanding of the influence of culture on human behavior and family dynamics.</li> <li>• Demonstrates understanding of how the strengths perspective and empowerment approaches can influence growth, development, and behavior change.</li> </ul>
<b>Ethnic Sensitive &amp; Multicultural Practice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates sensitivity to clients’ differences in culture, ethnicity, and sexual orientation.</li> <li>• Demonstrates the ability to conduct an ethnically and culturally sensitive assessment of a child and family and to develop an appropriate intervention plan.</li> <li>• Demonstrates understanding of the importance of a client’s primary language and support its use in providing child welfare assessment and intervention services.</li> <li>• Demonstrates understanding of the influence and value of traditional, culturally based childrearing practices and use this knowledge in working with families.</li> <li>• Demonstrates the ability to collaborate with individuals, groups, community-based organizations, and government agencies to advocate for equitable access to culturally sensitive resources and services.</li> </ul>



<p><b>Core Child Welfare Practice</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is able to identify the multiple factors of social and family dynamics in child abuse and neglect, including the interaction of individual, family, and environmental factors.</li> <li>• Demonstrates understanding of the strengths-based “person in environment” perspective, and awareness of strengths which act to preserve the family and protect the child.</li> <li>• Demonstrates awareness and beginning understanding of the physical, emotional, and behavioral indicators of child neglect and abuse, child sexual abuse, substance abuse, and mental illness in child victims and their families—and be able to relate these indicators to Title 9, Title 30, and to DCP&amp;P policy.</li> <li>• Is developing knowledge of the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination in the lives of low-income and single-parent families and uses this knowledge in providing appropriate services.</li> <li>• Demonstrates an understanding of the dual responsibility of the child welfare case worker to protect children and to provide appropriate services to enable families to care for their children, including pre-placement preventive services.</li> <li>• Demonstrate understanding of the dynamics of all forms of family violence, and the importance of culturally sensitive case plans for families and family members to address these problems.</li> <li>• Recognizes the need to monitor the safety of the child by initial and ongoing assessment of risk, especially for children with special needs.</li> <li>• Demonstrates a beginning understanding of legal process and the role of social workers and other professionals in relation to the courts, including policy issues and legal requirements affecting child welfare practice.</li> <li>• Is in the process of developing a knowledge base about the effects of attachment, separation, and placement experiences for the child and the child’s family and the effects on the child’s physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development</li> <li>• Is in the process of developing an understanding of the importance of evidence-based practice and a basic understanding of empirical research.</li> <li>• Demonstrates awareness of the principles of concurrent and permanency planning with regard to younger children as well as planning for older children about to terminate from the child welfare system.</li> <li>• Is developing the capacity to utilize the case manager’s role in creating a helping system for clients, including working collaboratively with other disciplines and involving and working collaboratively with biological families, foster families, and kin networks.</li> <li>• Shows understanding of the value base of the profession and its ethical standards and principles, and practices accordingly.</li> <li>• Demonstrates the appropriate use of power and authority in professional relationships, as well as the dynamics of engaging and working with involuntary clients.</li> <li>• Demonstrates the ability to assess his or her own emotional responses to clients, co-workers, and situations.</li> <li>• Demonstrates an understanding of the importance of the termination process, with clients and with systems.</li> <li>• Demonstrates an understanding of the critical importance of documentation in public child welfare.</li> </ul>
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**MCWEP Core Competencies**

<b>Position Title</b>	<b>Core Knowledge &amp; Abilities</b>
<b>Trauma-informed Practice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrates the concept of “child traumatic stress” in case practice and supervision by knowing what types of experiences constitute childhood trauma and utilize a trauma informed lens to manage child welfare cases.</li> <li>• Applies knowledge of how traumatic experiences affect brain development and memory and understand the relationship between a child’s lifetime trauma history and his or her responses through comprehensive case planning.</li> <li>• Articulates how trauma has an impact on the behavior of children over the course of childhood and how child traumatic stress is exacerbated over time by ongoing stressors (including separation from/loss of caregivers, and/or foster placement) in a child’s environment and within the child welfare system.</li> <li>• Identifies and promotes the utilization of trauma-sensitive interventions such as strategic referrals to timely, quality, and effective trauma-focused interventions and trauma informed case planning with multi-disciplinary teams.</li> <li>• Articulates how the impact of traumatic stress can be prevented and/or mitigated by trauma-informed responses of child welfare workers and child welfare systems.</li> <li>• Considers how cultural factors influence the manner by which children may identify, interpret, and respond to traumatic events during the case practice process.</li> <li>• Identifies the impact of secondary traumatic stress (STS) on child welfare workers and employ appropriate interventions.</li> <li>• Supports the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) goals of safety, permanency, and well-being by increasing skills to effectively serve children and families (biological and resource) in the child welfare system that have experienced traumatic stress.</li> </ul>
<b>Child Welfare Leadership &amp; Supervision</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates an understanding of the role of ethics and the systems perspective in leadership behavior as a supervisor.</li> <li>• Describes key child welfare workforce issues, trends, and challenges from a national perspective.</li> <li>• Demonstrates the ability to identify evidence-based practice in child welfare supervision.</li> <li>• Demonstrates an understanding of the stages and key issues in the implementation of change initiatives.</li> <li>• Understands the relationship of creating a learning culture to staff retention and performance.</li> <li>• Describes interactional clinical supervision and discusses how it would be implemented in a public child welfare setting.</li> <li>• Describes and applies strategies to foster an inclusive workplace where diversity and individual differences are valued.</li> <li>• Describes the impact of trauma on worker retention and lists strategies to mitigate the stress of secondary trauma</li> </ul>

## APPENDIX C: TOTAL COURSES & DELIVERIES FOR FY2017 (JULY 1, 2016 – JUNE 30, 2017)

The following tables present the total number of training deliveries by course title held during FY2017.<sup>1</sup>

### New Worker Pre-Service Trainings

	Numbers of Times Course Conducted			
	Rutgers	Stockton	OTPD	University Partnership & OTPD
<b>Car Seat Safety – 3</b>		1	31	
<b>CPM 2 – 22</b>	1			
<b>CPM 3 – 23</b>	7	3		
<b>Hybrid Administrative Hearings</b>			1	
<b>Hybrid Pre-service CSOC</b>			1	
<b>Hybrid Pre-service Emergency Preparedness</b>			1	
<b>Hybrid Pre-service Mod 1</b>			7	
<b>Hybrid Pre-service Mod 2</b>			8	
<b>Hybrid Pre-service Mod 3</b>			8	
<b>Hybrid Pre-service Mod 4</b>			9	
<b>Hybrid Pre-service Mod 5</b>			8	
<b>Hybrid Pre-service Mod 6</b>			7	
<b>Hybrid Pre-service Mod 7 – Simulation – Worker2Worker – 5 Day</b>			1	
<b>Hybrid Pre-service Mod 7 – Simulation – Worker2Worker – 7 Day</b>			4	
<b>Hybrid Pre-service Mod 7 – Simulation – Worker2Worker – 9 Day</b>			2	
<b>Hybrid Pre-service Mod 7 – Worker2Worker – 6 Day</b>			1	
<b>Hybrid Pre-service Mod 7 – Worker2Worker – 7 Day</b>			1	
<b>Hybrid Pre-service Parent Advocacy</b>			1	
<b>Hybrid Pre-service NJ Parent Link</b>			1	
<b>Hybrid Pre-service Orientation</b>			8	
<b>Hybrid Pre-service Testifying in Court</b>			1	
<b>New Worker Orientation: Welcome to DCF! - 1</b>			8	
<b>Safety Awareness - 265</b>		1	9	1
<b>Using Genograms and Ecomaps - 13</b>	8			

<sup>1</sup> Some courses were facilitated over multiple days and are therefore counted towards multiple training days.

## New Worker Foundation Courses Trainings

	Numbers of Times Course Conducted			
	Rutgers	Stockton	OTPD	University Partnership & OTPD
<b>CSA: Mod 1: Days 1 and 2 - 31</b>	5	3		
<b>CSA: Mod 1: Days 3 and 4 - 32</b>	5	3		
<b>CSA: Mod 2: Day 1 &amp; 2 - 33</b>	1	1		2
<b>CSA: Mod 2: Day 3 &amp; 4 - 34</b>	1	1		2
<b>Concurrent Permanency Planning - 38</b>	7	2		
<b>Domestic Violence Policy and the DCP&amp;P Case Practice Protocol - 41</b>	4	2		
<b>First Responders in CW: Mod 1 - 257</b>	2	1	7	
<b>First Responders in CW: Mod 2 - 258</b>	2		6	
<b>First Responders in CW: Mod 3 - 259</b>	2		5	
<b>Human Trafficking 1 - 260</b>	3		1	
<b>Human Trafficking 2 - 271</b>	2		2	
<b>Human Trafficking: Hybrid - 281</b>	2			
<b>Mental Health Screening Tool - 36</b>	1		5	
<b>Mental Illness - 035</b>	8			
<b>Substance Abuse 1 - 15</b>	4		6	
<b>Substance Abuse 2 - 16</b>	4		6	
<b>Substance Abuse 3 - 17</b>	4		6	
<b>Substance Abuse 4 - 18</b>	4		6	

## Mandatory Course Trainings

	Numbers of Times Course Conducted			
	Rutgers	Stockton	OTPD	University Partnership & OTPD
<b>Bringing the Protective Factors to Life - 554</b>	6	11		
<b>Child Protection &amp; Early Intervention: Working Together for Young Children - 229</b>	9	11		
<b>CPM 4 - 24</b>		1		
<b>Youth Thrive Day 1 - 99</b>	23	2		
<b>Youth Thrive Days 2 and 3 - 199</b>	23	2		

## Trainings for Elective Courses

	Numbers of Times Course Conducted			
	Rutgers	Stockton	OTPD	University Partnership & OTPD
<b>Adoption Recruitment / Placement Supports - 805</b>	1			
<b>Advanced Skills for Engaging and Teaming with Families – 266</b>	1			
<b>AFSW Mod 1: Working with and Supporting Families – 105</b>		2		
<b>AFSW Mod 2: Making Connections and Visits Matter – 106</b>		3		
<b>Aligning Our Values - 264</b>	1			
<b>Animal Abuse as a Risk Factor for Child Maltreatment and Family Violence - 280</b>		1		
<b>Art of Communication - 110</b>	1	1		
<b>Building Resiliency in Children: Why Some Bounce Back and Some Never Do - 242</b>	2	1		
<b>Celebrating Culture: Working with Latino Families - 122</b>		1		
<b>Child Protective Services and the Legal System: Mod 1 of 2 - 123</b>		1		
<b>Child Protective Services and the Legal System: Mod 2 of 2 - 124</b>		1		
<b>Child Sexual Abuse Issues for Child Welfare Supervisors: Mod 1 of 3 – 450</b>	1			
<b>Child Sexual Abuse Issues for Child Welfare Supervisors: Mod 2 of 3 – 451</b>	1			
<b>Child Sexual Abuse Issues for Child Welfare Supervisors: Mod 3 of 3 - 452</b>	1			
<b>Coaching the Challenging Employee - 305</b>	1			
<b>Compulsive Hoarding: Issues and Strategies - 166</b>		1		
<b>Coping with Vicarious Traumatization for Workers - 245</b>	1	3		
<b>CPR and First Aid - 128</b>	3	6		
<b>Cultural Competency - 134</b>			1	
<b>Customer Service and Time Management for DCP&amp;P Support Staff - 205</b>	1	1		
<b>Customer Service for Child Welfare Staff - 138</b>	1	1		
<b>Defensive Driving: A Classroom Based Course on Crash Avoidance - 253</b>	4	1		
<b>Difficult Conversations: A Survival Guide for Supervisors - 167</b>		1		
<b>Difficult Conversations: A Survival Guide for Workers - 168</b>	1	1		
<b>Documentation for Child Welfare Professionals - 141</b>			1	
<b>Domestic Violence Training for Supervisors - 345</b>	1			

	Numbers of Times Course Conducted			
	Rutgers	Stockton	OTPD	University Partnership & OTPD
<b>Engagement of Non-Residential Fathers - 149</b>		1	2	
<b>Enhancing Adoptive Families Support of LGBTQI Youth - 850</b>	1			
<b>Ethical Issues and Values in Violence against Women Work - 403</b>	2			
<b>Everyday Self Defense for Social Workers - 273</b>		8		
<b>Everyone has a Story - 262</b>	1			
<b>Excel Training: Beginners Level - 152</b>	2	1		
<b>Excel Training: Intermediate Level - 153</b>	2	2		
<b>Excel Training: Advanced Level - 154</b>	7			
<b>Executive Writing Skills - 346</b>	1			
<b>Factual Witness Training - 851</b>	1			
<b>Financial Empowerment - 406</b>	2			
<b>First Responders for Supervisors: Mod 1 – 453</b>	1			
<b>First Responders for Supervisors: Mod 2 – 454</b>	1			
<b>First Responders for Supervisors: Mod 3 - 455</b>	1			
<b>Fostering Youth Participation in Court - 268</b>		2		
<b>Gang Identification, Trends, and the Psychology of Gang Members – 163</b>	1	1		
<b>Girls and Gangs – 164</b>	1	1		
<b>Grandparents Stepping In: Assessing Older Adults as Surrogate Caregivers: Mod 1 of 3 – 112</b>	2	1		
<b>Grandparents Stepping In: Assessing Older Adults as Surrogate Caregivers: Mod 2 of 3 – 113</b>	2	1		
<b>Grandparents Stepping In: Assessing Older Adults as Surrogate Caregivers: Mod 3 of 3 – 114</b>	2	1		
<b>Impact of Substance Abuse on Parenting - 217</b>	3	1		
<b>Infant Care Basics for Non-Parenting Professionals - 171</b>	1	1		
<b>Interviewing Children with Consideration of Their Development - 173</b>		1		
<b>Legal Responses to Violence Against Women - 407</b>	1			
<b>Legal Writing Guidelines for the Litigation Unit - 575</b>	1	1		
<b>Lifebook Work for Child Welfare Professionals - 269</b>	3	4		
<b>Missing and Exploited Youth - 200</b>	1	1		
<b>Normal Sexual Development through the Child Welfare Lens – 183</b>	2			
<b>Preparing Children for Adoption – 806</b>	1			
<b>Presentation Skills – 190</b>	1	1		
<b>SPRU Training for Workers - 255</b>	1		1	

	Numbers of Times Course Conducted			
	Rutgers	Stockton	OTPD	University Partnership & OTPD
<b>Strengthening Casework Documentation: Day 1 - 142</b>	1	2		
<b>Strengthening Casework Documentation: Day 2 - 143</b>	1	2		
<b>Student Bullying: What Caseworkers Need to Know &amp; Do - 209</b>		2		
<b>Supervisory Practices in CW Mod 1 - 301</b>			2	
<b>Supervisory Practices in CW Mod 2 - 302</b>			2	
<b>Supervisory Practices in CW Mod 3 - 303</b>			2	
<b>Supporting Attachment in Adoptive Families - 804</b>	1			
<b>Technology Addiction - 215</b>		1		
<b>Testifying in Court - 156</b>	6			
<b>The Impact of Parental Incarceration on Children in the Child Welfare System - 216</b>	1	1		
<b>Toddler Care Basics for Non-Parenting Professionals - 263</b>	1	1		
<b>TPYS &amp; CLSA - 239</b>	5			
<b>Trauma Informed Response when Working with Adoptive Families - 852</b>	1			
<b>Understanding Perpetration of Violence Against Women - 410</b>	2			
<b>Understanding Types of Mental Health Assessment &amp; Evaluation - 267</b>	1	1		
<b>Violence Against Women and Mental Health - 409</b>	2			
<b>Violence Against Women and Substance Abuse - 411</b>	2			
<b>Violence Against Women in Middle and High School Populations - 408</b>	2			
<b>What Every Caseworker Needs to Know About Education and Special Education for Children in the Child Welfare System - 228</b>	2	1		
<b>Working with Arab-Americans and Muslim Families - 231</b>	1	1		
<b>Working with Immigrant Families - 070</b>	2			
<b>Working with Parents with Cognitive Challenges - 232</b>	1	1		
<b>Working with South Asian Families - 184</b>	2			
<b>Working with Veterans and Military Families - 234</b>	2	1		

## APPENDIX D: NJ DCF TRAINING UNIT POLICY

The following provides portions of the Field Training Unit policy at NJ DCF:

 <p style="text-align: center;"><b>New Jersey Department of Children and Families Policy Manual</b></p>			
Manual:	CP&P	Child Protection & Permanency	Effective Date:
Volume:	IX	Administrative	
Chapter:	C	Training	4-4-2017
Subchapter:	4	Field Training	
Issuance:	100	<b>Field Training Unit (Local Office)</b>	

**Purpose:**

This issuance establishes the policies and procedures relating to the Field Training Unit, CP&P, and local office staff.

**Policy:**

**A) Overview of the Field Training Unit Model**

Each Local Office will establish Field Training Unit(s) according to the guidelines in this policy. The Field Training Unit composed of **seven New Workers or less**, is a functioning unit where the New Worker reports and works on field days during the entire Pre-Service Training period and for a period of approximately six months from the start of employment.

**B) Role of the Field Training Unit**

The Field Training Unit will:

- Develop New Workers into well-rounded Workers, suitable for transfer in 6 months (or slightly less time if the New Worker shows exceptional progress as outlined in this policy) to regular units within the Local Office,
- Support a Local Office's overall effort to train New Workers, and
- Provide internships for BSWs and MSWs, if appropriate.

**C) Field Training Supervisor and the New Worker**

During the New Worker's assignment to the unit, the Supervisor ensures the New Worker is familiar with:



- The work site; and
- Local Office procedures and systems; and
- The professional office environment.
- Community programs and partnerships; and
- Services and resources available within the jurisdiction of the Local Office.

**Note:** Periods of increased hiring - Secondary units may be necessary during periods of increased hiring depending upon the volume of New Workers assigned to the Unit.

#### **D) New Worker Caseload Assignment & Readiness Assessment Tool (CARAT)**

The CARAT is introduced to the Trainee within the first two weeks of employment. The CARAT is completed by the Field Training Unit Supervisor three times.

The first completion of the CARAT occurs at the end of two months of employment. The second completion occurs at the end of four months (this aligns with the working test period form from Human Resources). The final completion of the CARAT occurs prior to being assigned to a unit.

#### **E) BSW and MSW Internships**

The Field Training Unit is the unit in the Local Office where BSW interns, and possibly MSW interns, are assigned when learning about child welfare and child protective services work.

In situations where the Field Training Unit Supervisor does not possess a **MSW degree, two years of supervisory experience, and has not completed the required seminar in field instruction (SIFI) course (a requirement to supervise MSWs in field placement), he or she will not be able to supervise MSW interns.** In such cases, the Field Training Unit Supervisor and the Local Office Manager discuss options for assigning the MSW intern to another unit. There are no such requirements for supervising a BSW intern.

#### **F) Responsibilities of the Field Training Unit**

The Field Training Unit will:

- Create a learning circle where each New Worker is responsible for sharing and participating in the teaching and learning process;
- Convey a message of commitment to the Division's mission, policies and procedures;
- Identify and strengthen the New Worker's case practice skills;
- Be available and accessible to all unit members. If the Supervisor leaves his position, the Office Manager arranges unit coverage by a Supervisor in an "X" or "Y" position. If a covering Supervisor cannot be named, the Casework Supervisor supervises the unit. **See [CP&P-III-C- 5-100](#), Unit Coverage;**

- Ensure the New Worker is afforded the opportunity to experience diverse Division functions including case assignment types, community contacts, Local Office systems, and personnel interactions;
- Coordinate field days that are relevant to, and complement, the Office of Training and Professional Development's curriculum;
- Team the New Worker with different unit activities during the training process Conference each New Worker's caseload on a weekly basis or more often if needed; and
- Conduct joint field visits with the New Worker on a monthly basis to ensure the safety and well-being of the child and his or her family, effective case planning, and accurate assessment of cases for termination.

### G) Selecting the Field Training Unit Supervisor

The preference is to select a Supervisor who possesses an MSW degree however this is not an absolute requirement.

In addition to the Civil Service Commission's job specification requirements for a Supervising Family Services Specialist II, consider selecting a Supervisor who has:

- A diverse and extensive child welfare and child protective services background within the Division;
- Extensive knowledge of the Division's policies and procedures;
- Proven mentoring and team building skills;
- The support and respect of the Local Office Manager and other office staff to ensure the integrity of the Field Training Unit and its functions;
- An understanding of, and supportive approach to, the mission of the Division and the goals of the Sustainability and Exit Plan Summary; and
- An aptitude for and interest in patiently developing and nurturing New Workers.

### H) Field Training Unit Supervisor

The Field Training Supervisor will partner with the Office of Training and Professional Development to:

- Ensure the New Worker has an appropriate work station with a computer and user login identification;
- Provide time for completion of Pre-Service Training homework;
- Structure field experiences in alignment with New Worker Pre- Service Training requirements as detailed in the Office of Training and Professional Development Field Guide for New Workers;
- Sign-off **must to be returned to the trainer prior to the beginning of the last module** on completed field experiences as required in the Office of

Training and Professional Development Field Guide for New Workers;

- Offer support or coaching in information or skills acquisition;
- Work collaboratively with the Office of Training and Professional Development personnel to address problems as issues arise;
- Participate in regularly-scheduled meetings with the office of Training and Professional Development staff;
- Review and assess periodic feedback and evaluative data reports from the Office of Training and Professional Development regarding the New Worker's performance, behavior, and participation in training courses;

**Note: This task is performed by the FTU Supervisor**

- Take corrective action with the New Worker to address inappropriate behaviors in training, if needed. This includes:
  - Addressing the inappropriate behavior with the New Worker and sharing the resolution with the Trainer;
  - Advising the New Worker that continuing the inappropriate behavior could result in further corrective and/or disciplinary action, including expulsion from the Training Program, which could jeopardize his or her CP&P employment; and
  - Taking disciplinary action if the New Worker's inappropriate behavior continues beyond the initial interventions.
- **Assist the New Worker in scheduling** the required Pre-Service and Foundation Courses once he or she completes the Pre-Service Training;
- Track the New Worker's attendance and completion of both Pre-Service and Foundation courses for the New Worker's first 18 months of employment even if the New Worker moves to a regular unit;

**Note:** If an employee misses a training class, the Office of Training and Professional Development will reschedule the class. If the rescheduled class is missed, it is up to the Assistant Area Director, with the assistance of the local office Field Training Unit Supervisor, to ensure that the New Worker is re-enrolled in the missed class.

- Set up a conference with the New Worker and his or her new Supervisor prior to transferring the New Worker to a permanent unit within the Local Office; and
- Discuss the New Worker's training history, progress, and schedule of remaining Foundation Courses.

**Note:** The Field Unit Supervisor is responsible for conducting field visitation **at a minimum of** once a month with each of his or her Trainees. For the purposes of

observation, mentoring, and support - the Field Unit Supervisor is strongly encouraged to have more direct field visitation with the Trainee whenever possible.

## I) Roles and Responsibilities of the New Worker

The roles and responsibilities of the New Worker assigned to the Field Training Unit are as follows:

- Be fully prepared to discuss assigned cases during the case conference;
- Read the case record and ensure face to face contact with the family within designated time frames;
- Maintain the case record and its integrity;
- Provide for, or arrange, services for both child welfare and child protective services cases;
- Conference and investigate all child protective services reports and work with the Field Training Unit Supervisor to assess safety, risk, child and caregiver strength and needs, and to develop investigation conclusions and summaries;
- Develop case plans on all assigned cases and coordinate services on cases as required in conjunction with his or her Supervisor and the family;
- Use the case conferences process to monitor case progress towards completing case goals;
- Actively participate in all aspects of classroom training, on-line training and field related assignments;
- Attend all required formal and informal training, including the formal Office of Training and Professional Development's courses as well as informal training arranged by the Field Training Unit Supervisor;
- Complete all homework and field training unit learning assignments on time;
- Take ownership of own casework skills development and seek supervisory and peer feedback and assistance;
- Become responsible for knowing the Division's policies and procedures;
- Become knowledgeable of human development;
- Complete and update required paperwork and documentation within Division time frames;
- Utilize formal and informal tracking systems to ensure compliance with necessary time frames deadlines; and
- Gain knowledge necessary to use electronic recording and information system.

## J) Types of Cases that Can be Assigned

A new Worker may be assigned identified low or moderate risk cases and a very limited number of high risk cases that **do not include sexual abuse or complex factors. The exceptions to this policy include:**

- When an allegation of abuse/neglect is alleged, and the new Worker finds out it is a sexual abuse case, he or she will contact the local office to speak to his or her Supervisor. The Supervisor will assign an experienced Worker to respond and take the lead in completing the investigation.
- If a case has a "history" of sexual abuse which was resolved in the past, and there is a new intake investigation not involving sexual abuse is received, the new Worker can be assigned the case.

The New Worker's caseload must be diverse in population, service needs and procedural content in order to maintain the learning environment. The cases assigned will provide different case situations such as:

- A child in out-of-home placement
- A multi-problem family (e.g., substance abuse, homelessness, etc.)
- A case in litigation

### **K) Types of Cases Not to Assign**

Under no circumstances will a New Worker be assigned very high risk cases at first. The Supervisor must provide case conferencing and clear directions on all initial and on-going cases assignments to ensure reasonable case handling.

Certain difficult case types are not considered appropriate for assignment during a New Worker's Pre-Service Training period. Obviously, complex cases of sexual abuse and the most difficult physical abuse cases must be reserved for assignment to a more experienced worker rather than a New Worker.

The New Worker is **not**:

- Assigned sexual abuse cases until completing the 8 day sexual abuse training
- Assigned difficult physical abuse cases
- Assigned very high risk or high risk cases involving complex factors which warrants enhanced skill or knowledge levels not yet available to the New Worker
- Able to complete Dodd removals during the first 60 days unless accompanied by an experienced, skilled staff person

Trainees in Pre-Service training are not permitted to complete MVRs alone within their first 60 days of service. See [CP&P-III-C-3-100](#), Trainees and MVRs.

### **L) Assignment to a Unit**

The Supervisor, in conjunction with the Casework Supervisor and/or the Local Office Manager, considers several factors when determining the New Worker's readiness for

assignment to a Unit. These factors include, but are not limited to, the New Worker's level of performance within the Office of Training and Professional Development and the Field Training Unit based on:

- Events documented in the New Worker's Performance Assessment Review (PAR)
- Progress documented on the New Worker Participation in Training Report provided by the Office of Training and Professional Development
- Strengths and weaknesses observed in the New Worker's job performance and case conference discussions
- Ability to understand, interpret, and apply agency casework policies and procedures
- The passing score on the Family Service Specialist Trainee Caseload Assignment Readiness Assessment Tool (CARAT)
- Previous child welfare/child protective services experience
- Ability to qualify for promotion to a Family Service Specialist (FSS) II based on education and experience and demonstrates the ability to perform FSS II job duties

**Note:** Trainees will be assigned to an Intake, Permanency, Adoption, or Adolescent Unit. Cases will be assigned to Trainee's after he or she completes "Child Development: Identifying Abuse and Neglect" module.

#### **M) Exceptions to Assignment to the Field Training Unit**

A New Worker starting with the Division as a FSS II, based on education and experience outlined in this policy, may be considered for:

- Immediate assignment to a unit other than the Field Training Unit
- An assignment to the Field Training Unit for a period less than the usual six month period

Under either type of assignment, the New Worker is required to participate in the formal training sessions conducted, or arranged, by the Field Training Unit Supervisor.

**Note:** Exceptions may be considered for a previous CP&P worker returning to the Division within two years. Any exception to assigning a New Worker to the Field Training Unit requires the approval of the Area Director.

#### **N) Timeframes For Gradual Case Assignment**

Cases are assigned gradually to promote learning. Cases are **not** assigned for mere coverage or other operational reasons. The Supervisor begins to assign one to two cases to the new Worker only after he or she has successfully completed the child development module of the Pre-Service training Program. The Supervisor gradually assigns additional cases as appropriate. By the end of the third month of employment, the new Worker may

have a total of seven cases, with no more than five children in placement, and no more than twelve children in total.

A new Worker is assigned one or two cases incrementally after completing “Child Development – Identifying Child Abuse and Neglect” module. The new Worker completes this module approximately **eight to nine** weeks after the Pre-Service Training program begins.

#### **O) Four Months to Six Months of Employment**

Beginning the first week of the fourth month, the Supervisor gradually assigns one case per week until the New Worker receives up to eight additional cases. As these new cases are assigned, the New Worker must have no more than 10 children in placement. The gradual assignment is limited to no more than one case per week. Additional cases are assigned to the trainee, on a gradual basis, until the trainee has a full caseload of 15 cases.

#### **P) Six Months and Beyond**

After the sixth month, the Trainee must have a full caseload. The full caseload is **15 families per Worker with no more than ten children in placement.**

#### **Q) Exceptions to Gradual Case Assignment**

In individual situations, the gradual waiving assignment of cases to New Worker may be waived. Exception requests may be granted based on the background, competence, knowledge, and abilities of the New Worker. Some of these exceptions include:

- A former employee returning to CP&P within two years
- A New Worker with several years of child protective service/child welfare experience from another agency/jurisdiction
- A New Worker who successfully completed an internship with the Division, who demonstrated proficiency and skill
- A New Worker with specific educational credentials or specialized training which prepared him or her for child protective service/child welfare service duties
- A New Worker who had been employed by, or worked with, a CP&P contract agency specializing in the provision of child protective services/child welfare services
- A New Worker with related life or work experiences that management views as beneficial in deviating from gradual case assignment

**Note:** Any exception to the gradual assignment system, as explained in this issuance, requires the prior approval of the Area Director.

#### **R) Case Coverage During New Worker Trainee Classroom Setting**

If any cases assigned to the New Worker during his or her Pre-Service Training Period or foundation courses, the Supervisor must provide back-up coverage for those cases

while the New Worker Trainee attends class. The New Worker Trainee must not be taken away from his or her classroom to perform case management duties.

#### **Procedures:**

##### **1) Assigning the New Worker to the Unit**

In the first **six weeks** of employment, the New Worker reports to the Field Training Unit in his or her respective Local Office beginning the first day of work. During the first **twelve to thirteen weeks** of employment, the New Worker's work schedule alternates between training sessions with the Office of Training and Professional Development and field assignments within the Field Training Unit.

**Length of assignment** - A New Worker is assigned to the Field Training Unit for approximately six months.

#### **Key Terms (Definitions):**

- **"Field Training Unit"** refers to a unit in the Local Office comprised of a Supervisor and a group of New Workers.
- **"Foundation Courses"** refers to the follow-up in-service programs, administered by the New Jersey Office of Training and Professional Development in the Department of Children and Families, that the New Worker completes during the first 18 months of employment.
- **"New Worker"** refers to a Family Services Specialist Trainee or a new employee hired at the Family Services Specialist II level.
- **"New Worker Training Program"** refers to the 12 to 13 week Pre-Service Training and the follow-up in-service Foundation Courses.
- **"Pre-Service Training"** refers to the 12 to 13 week training program for New Workers administered by the New Jersey Office of Training and Professional Development in the Department of Children and Families.
- **"Supervisor"** refers to a Supervising Family Services Specialist II.
- **"Case Load Assignment Readiness Assessment Tool" (CARAT)** refers to a process that is used by a Trainee's Supervisor to evaluate the new Worker's readiness to assume a full caseload.

#### **Forms and Attachments**

- Caseload Assignment Readiness Assessment Tool (CARAT) Purpose and How to Use
- Family Service Specialist Trainee Caseload Assignment Readiness Assessment Tool (CARAT) Chart



## APPENDIX E: NJ DCF NEW WORKER TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

The following provides portions of the New Worker Training Requirement policy at NJ DCF:

 <b>New Jersey Department of Children and Families Policy Manual</b>			
Manual:	CP&P	Child Protection & Permanency	Effective Date:
Volume:	IX	Administrative	
Chapter:	C	Training	12-20-2016
Subchapter:	1	New Workers	
Issuance:	100	<b>New Workers (FSST's) Training Requirements</b>	

### Purpose:

This issuance establishes the responsibilities Office of Training and Professional Development regarding newly hired staff during his or her first year of employment.

### Policy:

#### A) Welcome to DCF: Responsibilities, Expectations, and Employment Benefits

This orientation is a mandatory three day overview of the functions of DCF. This orientation is followed by the Pre-Service Training Program, which is offered to all new Family Service Specialist Trainees (FSST) and Baccalaureate Child Welfare Education Program (BCWEP) employees.

#### B) Pre-Service Training

Pre-Service Training is over 190 hours, comprised of 7 instructional modules and several guest presentations. The Office of Training and Professional Development will provide formal Pre-Service training to all new FSST. Pre-Service training is **not** mandatory for BCWEP interns hired as FSS Trainees. **See CP&P-IX-C-3-100.**

- └ Hybrid Orientation
- └ Understanding Child Welfare in New Jersey – Case Practice Model (CPM) 1;
- └ Cultivating Awareness: Promoting Worker safety, well-being and success;
- └ Focusing on Families: From Screening to Closing Computer Application (NJ SPIRIT/SDM)
- └ Child Development: Identifying Child Abuse and Neglect
- └ Engaging and Interpersonal Helping Skills - Making Visits Matter (CPM2), and
- └ Simulation

Field practicum activities are guided by a Field Training Unit Supervisor.

### **C) Proficiency Requirements**

Competency examinations are administered after each module. Workers must score a minimum of 70% to successfully advance to subsequent modules and complete the course. Trainees must use family engagement and case documentation skills learned throughout Pre-Service Training, in order to conduct a CPS investigation. Simulation training is a taped, recorded event. Trainees are debriefed following the simulation exercise.

### **D) Pre-Service Outside Presenters**

Workers will receive training from Professional Center staff and from outside presenters.

The curriculum will include:

- └ Educational Stability
- └ Introduction to Testifying in Court
- └ Parent Advocacy
- └ NJ Parent Link
- └ Disaster Preparedness – Emergency Response
- └ Administrative Hearings
- └ CSOC – Introduction to the Children’s System of Care and
- └ Worker2Worker

### **E) Foundation Courses**

Following the successful completion of the Pre-Service Training, the Office of Training and Professional Development will provide instruction as to the completion of the required Foundation courses. Foundation courses must be taken by all new Trainees during their first year of employment.

Some courses are offered on-line and monitored by the Office of Training and Professional Development. Other courses are conducted by DCF's University Partners and the NJ Battered Women's Coalition.

The Foundation Courses offer instruction in the following areas:

1. Genograms and Eco maps
2. Case Practice Model (CPM)
3. Understanding Substance Abuse and Addiction
4. Concurrent Planning
5. Mental Illness
6. Mental Health Screening Tool