

Issue Brief – DCFS Additional Caseworkers

DIVISION OF CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES

NUMBER DHS-07-21

ADDITIONAL CASEWORKERS

The Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) is requesting an appropriation of \$1,525,700 with \$1,258,700 from General Funds and \$267,000 from federal funds for 21.5 additional caseworkers for FY 2007.

OBJECTIVE

DCFS' primary purpose is to provide child welfare services and to protect children from abuse and neglect. This includes child abuse and neglect investigations, child abuse prevention services, family preservation services, child protective services, shelter care, foster care, residential treatment care, adoption services, independent living programs, and domestic violence related services.

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

The growth in the foster care population has placed more demands on caseworkers. In September of 2002, the Office of the Legislative Auditor General (OLAG) issued a report (number 2002-05) which established the average caseload per caseworker. The following table shows that 21.5 caseworkers are needed to comply with the audit findings (the standard set by OLAG is highlighted):

	Number of Cases	Number of Caseworkers	Caseload / Caseworker	Caseload		Overage/ Shortage
				per Leg. Audit	Caseworkers Needed	
Child Protective Services	1,499	116	12.9	15	100	16.2
Foster Care	2,490	174	14.3	12	208	(33.7)
In-Home Services	978	72	13.6	15	65	7.0
Family Preservation	215	40	5.3	4	54	(13.4)
Generalist	129	11	11.7	15	9	2.4
Total Number of FTEs Short						(21.5)

RECOMMENDATION

The Subcommittee may want to prioritize this request for funding of additional caseworkers with \$1,258,700 from General Funds and \$267,000 from federal funds for a total of \$1,525,700.