

DCF LEGISLATIVE TESTIMONY



February 20, 2023

TESTIMONY OF

Tanya Keys, Deputy Secretary
Kansas Department for Children and Families

TESTIMONY ON

Proponent Written Only HB 2371

Chair

Representative Concannon

Vice Chair

Representative Johnson

Ranking Minority

Representative Ousley

and

Members of the Committee

SUMMARY OF ISSUE & DCF POSITION

Chair Concannon and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify as a proponent on HB 2371 which limits the number of child in need of care cases assigned to case managers. The proposed legislation would require the maximum number of out-of-home cases not to exceed 18, except for temporary staffing vacancies or to keep sibling groups with the same case manager.

CONTEXT & HISTORY

Council on Accreditation includes standards and context guidance for private agency foster care service delivery caseload limits. The Department for Children and Families (DCF) requires foster care case management agencies to be accredited by a national accrediting entity. As such, agencies providing foster care services in Kansas are familiar with recommended caseload limits of the number of children and the context of caseload limits accommodating one case manager for a sibling group and short-term staffing vacancies. In the 2018-2019 grant awards for foster care case management, DCF included standards that caseloads not exceed 25-30 children which did not align with other language in the grant terms that the agency maintain accreditation standards. In their March 2022 report *Reviewing Foster Care Services for the Health and Safety of Children*, Legislative Post Audit found that case management providers' average caseloads were generally higher than best practices but lower than DCF's standards. Case management providers' average caseloads varied from month to month and by provider. They were between 16 to 24 cases per case manager.

EFFECT OF LEGISLATION & FISCAL IMPACT

The legislation limits caseloads to 18 children which is a lower caseload than some current case management agencies maintain. Statewide fiscal impact to DCF is estimated at \$5.1 Million. This cost would be granted out to the current Child Welfare Case Management Providers if received, therefore no positions are requested. DCF's case manager provider costs are a subset of the foster care budget which is reviewed every 6 months in the consensus caseload process.

<i>Area and Providers</i>	<i>FY 2024 Estimated Monthly Caseload</i>	<i>Current CMP Caseloads FTEs</i>	<i>FTEs to achieve 18 Case Maximum</i>	<i>Additional CMP Positions Needed</i>
<i>Area 1 - SFM</i>	734	32	41	9
<i>Area 2 - SFM</i>	877	38	49	11
<i>Area 3 - KVC</i>	792	38	44	6
<i>Area 4 - TFI</i>	699	28	39	11
<i>Area 5 - CoC</i>	576	38	32	0
<i>Area 6 - KVC</i>	532	25	30	4
<i>Area 7 - SFM</i>	1346	48	75	27
<i>Area 8 - TFI</i>	529	23	29	6
<i>FTE's</i>		271	338	74

Current salary for a licensed social worker is \$45,000 plus benefits and other operating costs. The cost for 74 social workers plus benefits and operating expenses for these staff is represented below:

<i>Item</i>	<i>FY 2024</i>
Expenditures	
<i>Salaries and Benefits</i>	\$4,440,046
<i>Other Operating Expenditures</i>	\$722,351
<i>Total</i>	\$5,162,397
Financing	
<i>State General Fund</i>	\$4,480,444
<i>Federal Funds</i>	\$681,953
<i>Total</i>	\$5,162,397

DCF POSITION

DCF is supportive of this legislation and would ask this committee to pass favorably.