

JB Pritzker, Governor



Illinois Department of
DCFS
Children & Family Services

Heidi E. Mueller, Acting Director

Budget Proposal Overview

FY 2025





FAST FACTS



2.03 B

FY24 Budget

FY23



231,527

Hotline reports



145,406

Child victims associated with investigations of abuse or neglect



94,508

DCFS investigations conducted



23,863

Number of youth in our care



5,390

Number of children who entered into the department's care.



5,374

Youth achieving permanency. The reunification rate was **17.5%**; **10.6%** for adoption; and **2.4%** for guardianship



4,089

Number of families being served in the preservation program keeping kids at home

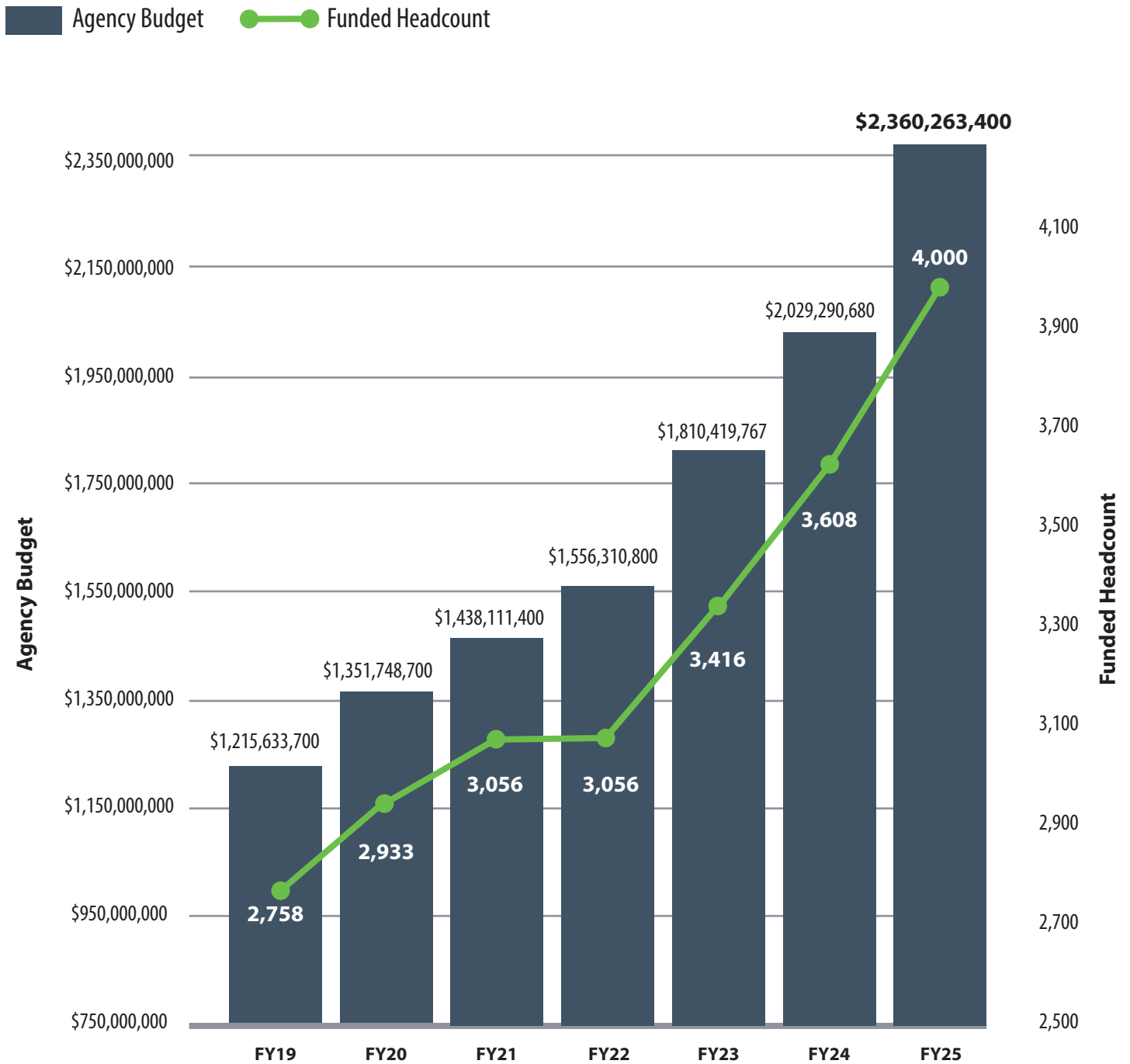


3,147

DCFS employees

Illinois Department of Children & Family Services Budget Highlights

DCFS Budget and Headcount FY19-25 Proposed



Illinois Department of Children & Family Services

Budget Highlights

DCFS Youth Served¹ FY21-25 Projected

	FY21 Actual	FY22 Actual	FY23 Actual	FY24 Estimated	FY25 Projected	FY24-25 Change	
						Number	Percent
Foster Homes & Specialized Foster Care							
Home of Relative	11,595	11,538	11,103	10,836	10,779	(57)	-0.5%
Regular (Traditional)	3,851	3,722	3,500	3,598	3,579	(19)	-0.5%
Specialized	2,643	2,352	2,476	2,351	2,339	(12)	-0.5%
Total Youth in Foster Homes	18,089	17,608	17,079	16,785	16,697	(88)	-0.5%
Institution & Group Home (I/GH) Care & Prevention							
Institution & Grp. Home ²	845	732	737	772	821	49	6.3%
Independent / Transitional	391	345	359	354	354	0	0.0%
Emergency Shelter	17	33	40	40	40	0	0.0%
Total I/GH, Transitional, Shelter	1,253	1,110	1,136	1,166	1,215	49	4.2%
Paid Substitute Care Subtotal (Foster Homes + I/GH + ILO/TLP + Shelter)	19,342	18,718	18,215	17,951	17,912	(39)	-0.2%
Youth in Other Settings ³	3,018	4,214	5,648	5,566	5,554	(12)	-0.2%
Grand Total Youth Served⁴	22,360	22,932	23,863	23,517	23,466	(51)	-0.2%
Adoption & Guardianship							
Adoption	18,750	17,501	16,318	16,294	16,193	(100)	-0.6%
Guardianship	2,609	2,623	2,634	2,747	2,887	140	5.1%
Total Adoption/Guardianship	21,359	20,124	18,952	19,041	19,080	40	0.2%

NOTES:

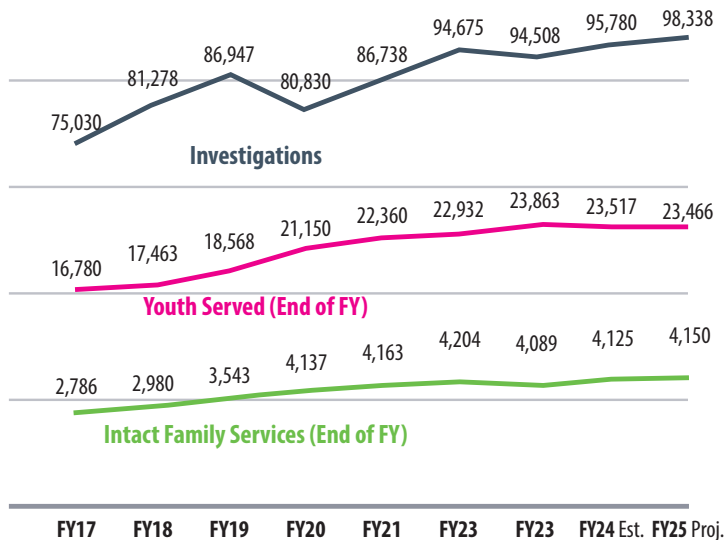
¹ End-of-Fiscal Year Cases

² IGH Counts = on-site only, excluding children absent from placement

³ Includes youth in Home of Parent, College/Scholarship, Detention/Corrections, Absent from Placement, Other Independent, Hospital Stays (Mental and Physical), Other Institutions/Facilities, Community Integrated Living Arrangements (CILAs), Job Training, Armed Services and other settings.

⁴ Includes all open child cases, regardless of legal guardianship status.

DCFS Caseload Trends FY17-25 Projected



Illinois Department of Children & Family Services Budget Highlights

Fund Summary (\$ in thousands)	FY23 Expenditures	FY24 Approp.	FY25 Request	FY24-25	
				\$ Change	% Change
All Funds - Total	1,577,759.9	2,029,209.7	2,360,263.4	331,053.7	16.3%
State Funds Subtotal	1,570,769.0	2,015,880.6	2,344,446.8	328,566.2	16.3%
General Revenue (GRF)	1,289,306.3	1,401,779.3	1,477,990.7	76,211.4	5.4%
DCFS Children's Services (CSF)	280,857.3	561,306.8	713,661.6	152,354.8	27.1%
DCFS Special Purpose Trust (SPT)	605.4	52,794.5	52,794.5	0.0	0.0%
Build Illinois Bond Fund (BIB)	0.0	0.0	100,000.0	100,000.0	n/a
Federal Funds Subtotal	6,990.9	13,329.1	15,816.6	2,487.5	18.7%
DCFS Federal Projects (FPF)	4,289.5	12,316.6	15,816.6	3,500.0	28.4%
State CURE (CUR)	2,701.4	1,012.5	0.0	-1,012.5	-100%

Program Group Funding (\$ in thousands)	FY23 Expenditures	FY24 Approp.	FY25 Request	FY24-25	
				\$ Change	% Change
DCFS Program Group	1,577,759.9	2,029,209.7	2,360,263.4	331,053.7	16.3%
Protective Services	188,539.0	248,819.3	293,762.1	44,942.7	18.1%
Adoption & Guardianship	194,786.3	223,148.6	227,575.1	4,426.5	2.0%
Family Maintenance	106,814.0	138,105.2	145,595.6	7,490.4	5.4%
Family Reunification	1,025,517.5	1,339,885.6	1,603,513.8	263,628.1	19.7%
Accountability	62,103.2	79,250.9	89,816.9	10,566.0	13.3%



Illinois Department of Children & Family Services FY24 Progress

HIRING & EMPLOYMENT

EMPLOYMENT GROWTH

DCFS continues to grow our staff and increase our team to meet the operational needs of the agency by serving the children and families of Illinois. As demand for services continue to grow, our recruitment team has made incredible efforts to attract employees and increase our headcount to the highest it has been (more than 3,450). DCFS continues to attract talented individuals who want to work for an organization tied to a mission.



RECRUITING NEW STAFF

To expand our recruitment efforts and develop a focused comprehensive plan, the recruitment team has engaged the department’s marketing consultants to use geo-targeting for job candidates, traditional and earned media and employing the use of the department’s six regional recruiters and statewide recruitment manager. Bilingual teams including those from the departments’ Division of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) will also assist in recruitment of bilingual Spanish speaking candidates focusing on Chicago and the northern region. Two unprecedented open hire events with immediate on-the spot offers of employment for qualified candidates took place in June 2023 in Bloomington and Rockford. Recruitment will focus on permanency and child protection with offers being made to intern candidates as well.

DCFS also implemented the **Senator Pat McGuire Educational Fellowship Stipend Program** pilot which has increased support for students considering careers in child welfare:

- Increased funding of this educational stipend program that provides up to \$20,000 toward tuition, books and fees for students entering a career in child welfare as direct service private agency staff following graduation.
- The program has been made available to all public state universities that have BSW and/or MSW programs.

DCFS Hiring

FY	Total New Hires	Investigator Adds*	Total Separations	Total Agency Headcount**
FY 2019	447	190	-372	2,748
FY 2020	354	148	-384	2,752
FY 2021	496	159	-370	2,861
FY 2022	560	188	-398	2,979
FY 2023	568	194	-385	3,140
FY 2024	581	215	-277	3,458

* Investigator Adds – These numbers are included in the total adds and does not reflect internal moves to DCP worker; Add-Sep numbers for FY24 thru January.

**Total Agency HC - Reflects end of year numbers, FY24 thru February.

Illinois Department of Children & Family Services

FY24 Progress (cont'd)

SCR "HOTLINE"

In 2019, SCR partnered with the University of Illinois Children and Family Research Center to design and conduct a review of the hotline and engaged in CMS' Rapid Response process to help DCFS improve performance and streamline our work. ALL recommendations from the review were implemented. These improvements contributed to the ability of SCR to shift to fully remote operations at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic and led to significant improvements in performance.

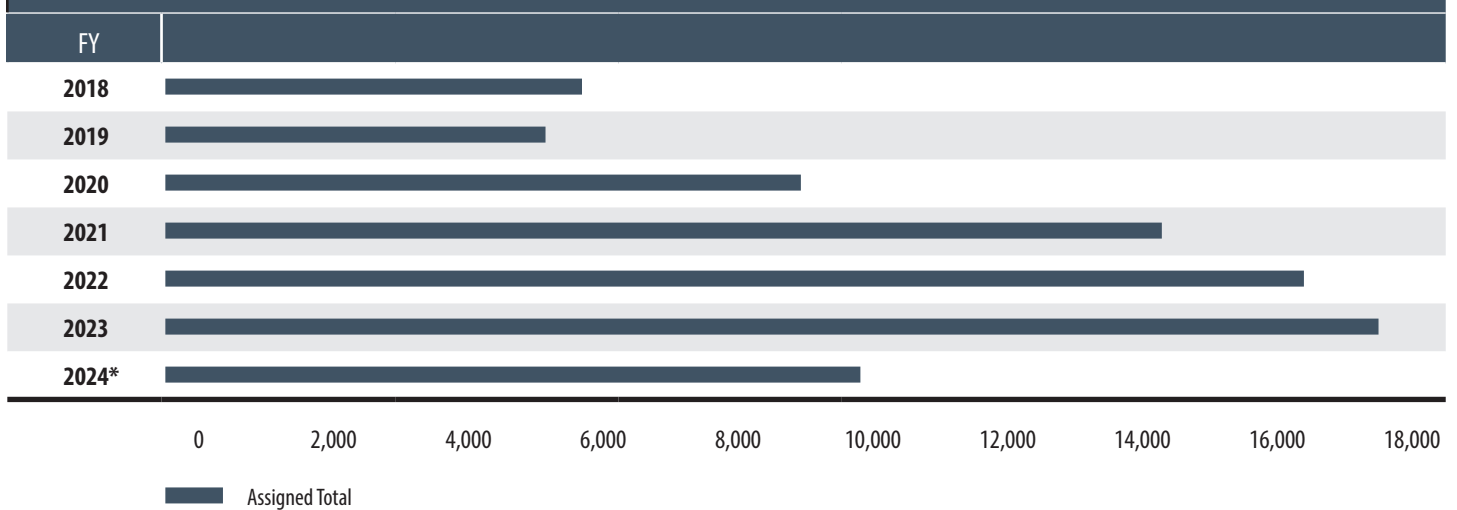
In previous years, the hotline was handling only 40% of calls in real time. The other 60% would require a call floor worker to take a message and return the call later to complete the report.

After these improvements, FY22, FY23 and through today in FY24, performance measures show the hotline handled every single call in real time, with no message taking.¹

SCR also developed a new and improved online child abuse and neglect reporting system that is easier to use and accessible from mobile devices. Following a massive communications campaign in FY22 online reports now make up nearly 25% of all reports to the hotline.

When reports to the hotline do not meet statutory requirements to become an investigation, the child welfare specialists at our hotline are committed to connect families to the preventative support and services they need. SCR has worked diligently in partnership with the Department of Human Services (DHS), the Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS), the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ), Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) and the Department of Public Health (DPH) to minimize unnecessary family separation in cases where psychiatric care is the predominate need.

Child Welfare Referrals Intake Volume



*As of 1/31/24

¹In FY22 and FY23, less than 100 messages were taken out of nearly 500,000 reports, due to brief network outages.

Illinois Department of Children & Family Services FY24 Progress (cont'd)

CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

With support from Governor Pritzker and the Illinois General Assembly, DCFS has been able to provide \$55M in FY23 and FY24 for Level of Care Support Services, increasing capacity for youth in care and providing them with the most clinically appropriate settings and supporting capital needs to increase residential capacity throughout the state.

Population service:

- DD/ASD
- Youth Involved in Trafficking
- ASD Youth–Assessment and Stabilization
- High Acuity Mental Health
- Medically Complex
- Medically Complex / Mental Health
- LGBTQI+



UP House, January 2024

FY23 – Capital Grants Program \$25M

Population Service	Capacity Impact
DD/ASD	36 additional beds
Young Child QRTP	Preserved 46 beds
DD/ASD	Preserved 33 beds & Development Plans for 30 new beds
Complex Trauma Male	40 additional beds
DD Youth	10 additional beds
Medically Complex	10 additional beds
ICC	20 additional beds

FY24 – Capital Grants Program \$30M

Population Service	Capacity Impact
DD/ASD	30 additional beds*
Trafficked Youth	10 additional beds
LGBTQ Youth	6 additional beds
DD/ASD	36 additional beds
Complex Trauma Male	40 additional beds*
ASD	4 beds
Complex Trauma, SPB	56 beds (up to)
Medically Complex	10 beds

Development–Key Highlights

Three new providers to DCFS receiving grants.

- FY23: 110 new beds added
- FY23: 76 beds preserved
- FY24: 122 new beds added

*Additional support from FY23 grant

Illinois Department of Children & Family Services

FY24 Progress (cont'd)

FAMILY FIRST

In October 2021, DCFS announced the approval of its Family First Title IV-E Prevention Plan by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Children's Bureau. The development of the plan was in collaboration with private agency partners and service providers; sister state agencies, including the Illinois Department of Human Services (DHS), Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services, Illinois Department of Public Health, and Illinois State Board of Education; and local community networks, community partners, child welfare experts and stakeholders.

Illinois was one of the first states to get approval for their plan. The five-year plan outlines how the state will support families in crisis by mobilizing and broadening the array of evidence-based interventions for parenting skills; substance use disorder prevention and treatment and mental health services to prevent children from entering foster care; encouraging and supporting kinship care; improving services to pregnant and parenting teens; and shortening lengths of stay and improving the quality of care for children for whom residential care is appropriate.

Six evidence-based interventions (EBIs) are currently provided to families targeted by Family First. One of these, Motivational Interviewing, is a well-supported, evidence-based intervention that will be used system-wide by caseworker staff and, as such, is not a contracted service. In FY23, Motivational Interviewing training was completed for Intact workers who provide preventative services. In FY24, booster training sessions have been made available to all staff through the Office of Learning and Professional Development (OLPD), and an intensive training conference is scheduled for May 2024, focused on fidelity and team-building. Emphasizing the use of Motivational Interviewing in all divisions of the department, particularly Permanency, will be a focus of the next year.

As of July 31, 2023, 1,630 referrals had been submitted through the provider portal, and referrals are continuing to increase weekly, including a 50% increase in referrals from Q1 to Q2 of FY24. The total number of clients served under Family First thus far is 1,429 through 25 community-based providers. Intact families continue to be the largest population served.

Illinois submitted an addendum to its current five-year plan, which is under review by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), to add a new intervention to the Illinois portfolio. High-Fidelity Wraparound is currently provided in 53 counties across Illinois. With the recent review by the federal clearinghouse and a finding as a promising practice, Illinois has applied to the Children's Bureau to amend the five-year plan and formally evaluate this intervention. Illinois plans to begin expansion of High-Fidelity Wraparound services statewide in FY25, with multiple providers anticipated to increase the number of counties they are serving. For all interventions, the department has an entire team providing implementation guidance to support staff in the field and providing an understanding of how to access these critical interventions. The DCFS Intact leadership team and Family First team will continue to support the community-based providers using the evidenced-based interventions available through FFPSA and utilize their feedback to improve and streamline the process of identifying families and submitting referrals.

Furthermore, Illinois is exploring the opportunity to add a kinship navigator component to the state's portfolio. While Illinois has a long history of supporting relative caregivers, a feasibility assessment is planned for the end of FY24 to identify ways to streamline and coordinate services to both formal and informal kinship caregivers, to align services with an evidence-based model and to coordinate with other state agencies in the delivery of supports to kinship caregivers statewide.

(continued)

Illinois Department of Children & Family Services FY24 Progress (cont'd)

Finally, the implementation of Qualified Residential Treatment Programs (QRTPs) according to the Family First Act continues to make progress. Illinois completely transitioned 45 contracts within 26 facilities to the QRTP facility model, developed updated residential monitoring tools and developed new processes for independent assessments and director's waivers. In FY24, 99% of independent assessments were completed within the 30-day timeline, and 28 director's waivers were completed. An interdivisional group of DCFS leadership meets weekly to focus on strengthening collaborative practice to support timely discharge of youth from QRTP and identify additional opportunities for increasing permanency and stability for youth in the child welfare system.



Illinois Department of Children & Family Services

FY24 Progress (cont'd)

CHILD WELFARE INSIGHTS TOOL – “DASHBOARD”

The launch of the Illinois Child Welfare Insights Tool in FY24 marked the first time that Illinois citizens, child welfare advocates and families receiving services from DCFS were provided with real-time access to information used by DCFS administrators. Data is updated daily and can be viewed at the county or state level, spanning the past 30 days or the past 12 months. Highlights include:

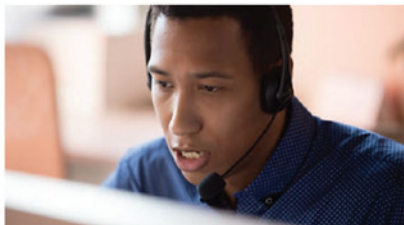
- The number of reports filed with the agency and how quickly DCFS staff responded.
- Percentages of youth in DCFS care who have met with medical teams or enrolled in development programs.
- Engagement activities, including a breakdown of how often and the means used by caseworkers to interact with families served by the department.

The Child Welfare Insights Tool highlights one of the efforts DCFS is making to provide increased transparency of those interested in the work of the department.

CHILD WELFARE INSIGHTS TOOL (website)

Improving Outcomes

This Child Welfare Insights Tool provides timely information and enhanced transparency to the public, policymakers and other decision-makers across Illinois. For more information on how the department is achieving safety for kids and providing loving homes and bright futures, please visit the pages below.



Responsiveness

Understand how DCFS delivers timely support at every step of a family's journey.

[View Here](#)



Child Experience

Learn about the Department's commitments to child safety, stability and long-term well-being.

[View Here](#)



Family Experience

Discover the DCFS approach to empowering families on the path to reunification.

[View Here](#)

All content included in the dashboards is for informative purposes only. Information presented is based on data updated daily from Illinois' Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System and may change at any time.

Illinois Department of Children & Family Services

FY24 Progress (cont'd)

LANGUAGE ACCESS

DCFS works hard to meet the needs of all Illinoisans and recognizes that English may not be the primary language spoken in the home. To that end materials are translated in any language requested. Last year, the DCFS Language Line received 5,940 requests for translations into 77 languages. Requested language translations ranged from Akateko (four requests) to Zomi (one request); Spanish remains the most requested language (4,312 requests).

Additionally, when needed, DCFS works to ensure that children who are in need of placements are in homes with caregivers who speak the same language; and we are proud to accomplish this approximately 98% of the time. Our Office of Employee Services team and our Division of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion staff are always seeking qualified bilingual candidates throughout the state as part of their employee recruitment efforts. Further, DCFS is the only state agency that has a Spanish and Polish website translated by humans to convey accuracy in translation of our important messages and information.



DCFS Top Five Most Requested Translated Languages

Rank	Language Request	Number of Requests	Percentage of All Requests
1	Spanish	4,312	72.6%
2	Arabic	266	4.5%
3	Polish	159	2.7%
4	French	154	2.6%
5	Russian	133	2.2%

Illinois Department of Children & Family Services

FY25 Budget Walk

Line Item	Amount	Pct.	Note
DCFS FY24 Enacted Appropriations	\$2,029,209,680		
Foster Homes & Specialized Foster Care	\$86,962,200	26%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annualization of FY24 rate increases (effective October 2023) • Salary increases for Child Welfare Agency Workers, supervisors and staff • Behavioral Health Transformation • Prevention initiatives • Kin caregiver initiative
Staffing	\$70,050,500	21%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increases Authorized Headcount from 3,608 to 4,000 • 392 additional staff • Union contract funding
Level of Care Support Services	\$70,000,000	21%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased capacity for youth placement in the most clinically appropriate settings • Appropriation from Build Illinois Bond Fund for multiple year funding
Institution & Group Home Care & Prevention	\$61,304,600	19%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annualization of FY24 rate increases (effective October 2023) • Increased beds for high end youth
Electronic Data Processing; Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System (CCWIS)	\$ 23,268,700	7%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical IT system improvements to support the Implementation of IllinoisConnect (the Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System) • IT transformation & staffing costs for Department of Innovation & Technology (DoIT)
Scholarships	\$5,497,800	2%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annualization of existing scholarships • Increased scholarships – up to 350 new in FY25
566 Spending Authority	\$3,500,000	1%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased spending authority to expend existing and anticipated federal awards
Day Care	\$ 3,438,800	1%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased Use of Protective & Family Maintenance Day Care • Annualization of DHS rate increases
Auxiliary Grant and Lump Sum Lines	\$2,547,200	1%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increases for budget-based contracts
Adoption & Guardianship Services	\$2,055,400	1%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional support for adoptive and guardianship homes
Litigation	\$1,700,000	1%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes funding for pre-removal legal services
CPM	\$1,500,000	0%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster Care start-up funds
Support Operations	\$1,241,000	0%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operational Costs Associated with headcount increase & worker safety: • Contractual • Equipment • Operation of auto
One-Time Appropriations	(\$1,000,000)	0%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislative grant line dedicated to Maryville Crisis Nursery • Expended funding for rate study
State CURES Act Funds	\$(1,012,480)	0%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reappropriation spend down of one time ARPA funding: • Cook Court Appointed Special Advocates • Child Advocacy Center
TOTAL CHANGES	\$ 331,053,720	100%	
DCFS FY25 Request	\$ 2,360,263,400		





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