

SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA



ITEM: 3.42  
(ID # 20078)

MEETING DATE:  
Tuesday, October 04, 2022

FROM : EXECUTIVE OFFICE:

SUBJECT: EXECUTIVE OFFICE: Response to the 2021-2022 Civil Grand Jury Report re:  
Children Services Division

RECOMMENDED MOTION: That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Approve the attached response to the 2021-2022 Civil Grand Jury Report re: Children Services Division; and
2. Direct the Clerk of the Board to forward the approved response to the Presiding Judge and the County Clerk-Recorder.

ACTION: Policy

  
Sayori Baldwin, DPSS Director

9/29/2022

  
Michael Bowers, Assistant HR Director

9/29/2022

  
Min C. Lari, County Counsel

9/30/2022

  
Jeff Van Wageningen, County Executive Officer

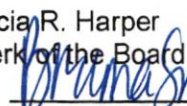
9/30/2022

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MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

On motion of Supervisor Perez, seconded by Supervisor Jeffries and duly carried by unanimous vote, IT WAS ORDERED that the above matter is approved as recommended.

Ayes: Jeffries, Spiegel, Washington, Perez and Hewitt  
Nays: None  
Absent: None  
Date: October 4, 2022  
xc: EO, DPSS, Grand Jury, Presiding Judge, Recorder

Kecia R. Harper  
Clerk of the Board  
By:   
Deputy

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE,  
STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

<b>FINANCIAL DATA</b>	<b>Current Fiscal Year:</b>	<b>Next Fiscal Year:</b>	<b>Total Cost:</b>	<b>Ongoing Cost</b>
<b>COST</b>	\$ N/A	\$ N/A	\$ N/A	\$ N/A
<b>NET COUNTY COST</b>	\$ N/A	\$ N/A	\$ N/A	\$ N/A
<b>SOURCE OF FUNDS: N/A</b>			<b>Budget Adjustment:</b>	<b>No</b>
			<b>For Fiscal Year:</b>	<b>22/23</b>

**C.E.O. RECOMMENDATION:** Approve

**BACKGROUND:**

**Summary**

Section 933(c) of the Penal Code requires that the Board of Supervisors comment on the Civil Grand Jury's recommendations pertaining to the matters under the control of the Board and that the response be provided to the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court, with a copy placed on file with the clerk of the public agency and the office of the county clerk.

Attached is a single document that includes the proposed response as required by the Board of Supervisors, the Department of Public Social Services, Human Resources, and County Counsel. In short, we agree with the findings and recommendations made by the Civil Grand Jury.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- A. Civil Grand Jury Report re: Children Services Division
- B. Response to the Civil Grand Jury Report re: Children Services Division

  
Tina Grande 9/29/2022

**RESPONSE TO 2021-22 CIVIL GRAND JURY REPORT**  
**Enhanced Organizational Culture and Leadership:**  
**Children Services Division Dedicated to Protecting Riverside County Children**

Following is the collective response of the Riverside County Board of Supervisors, in cooperation with Department of Public Social Services (including the Assistant CEO of Human Services / Director of DPSS, and Assistant Director of DPSS Children Services Division), Human Resources and County Counsel, to the findings and recommendations included in the above referenced Civil Grand Jury Report pursuant to California Penal Code §§ 933 and 933.05.

**FINDINGS**

**Grand Jury Finding #1:**

**ROLES and RESPONSIBILTIES:** The Grand Jury found that roles and responsibilities have been clearly defined in accordance with the recommendation from the 2019 External Review Analysis and Process Improvement report. We also found that there is clear and consistent communication between supervisors and County Counsel. CPS and County Counsel are working together to provide the support and the tools they need for making timely decisions that will protect the children.

SSPs and managers reported that the working relationship with County Counsel has had the “biggest impact.” Executive management promotes a “Strict Structure” approach and a “line of sight” management philosophy, which includes supervisors meeting with their SSPs daily, and supervisors meeting with regional managers. As described in an interview, this is “more work, but better efficiency.”

**Response to Grand Jury Finding #1:**

**Respondent agrees with the finding.**

**County Counsel:**

The Child Welfare Division of the Office of County Counsel has worked to provide consistent and streamlined legal training, advice, and support to the Department of Social Services / Child Services Division (DPSS/CSD).

Child Welfare County Counsel Deputies are available twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, to assist Social Service Practitioners with legal questions, investigative questions, and seeking court intervention through protective custody warrants. As of February 2022, a single Deputy County Counsel is assigned to handle all daytime warrants countywide to ensure legal sufficiency of Probable Cause Statements and provide consistent legal advice to DPSS/CSD. In addition, other County Counsel Deputies remain on-call to provide further support during high volume periods and to ensure the most prompt and expeditious response to warrant review and issuance.

The County Counsel Deputies within the Child Welfare Division rotate on a weekly basis to provide coverage after-hours, on weekends, and holidays to assist DPSS/CSD staff with legal questions and assistance with obtaining protective custody warrants.

Child Welfare County Counsel Deputies focus on seeking appropriate court intervention from a prospective of legal sufficiency while deferring to Social Service Practitioners and their management as experts in the practice of social work and child welfare.

**DPSS:**

County Counsel and DPSS/CSD partnered to enhance communication and develop protocols to promote operational continuity. Joint meetings and trainings between the Office of County Counsel attorneys and DPSS/CSD staff occur frequently to support proactive and productive collaboration. DPSS/CSD also implemented strategic data reporting with managers and executives to monitor and measure key performance indicators ("line of sight" method).

**Grand Jury Finding #2:**

WARRANT FOR REMOVAL PROCESS: While the Probable Cause Statements may seem "cumbersome, tedious and time consuming", according to only a few of SSPs interviewed, most reported that they feel comfortable with the process, especially with help from County Counsel. Policies and procedures for both daytime and afterhours processing were current as of 2020 and 2021, respectively. Several of those interviewed felt that the requirement to clearly articulate "preventable services to maintain the family unit" and having "dedicated law enforcement specifically working with CPS", have enhanced the process. The procedures for obtaining warrants, as written, specifically outline the roles and responsibilities of the SSPs, supervisors, and County Counsel. We found that current procedures for obtaining a warrant from the court for removal are working well.

**Response to Grand Jury Finding #2:**

**Respondent agrees with the finding.**

**DPSS:**

County Counsel and DPSS/CSD collaborated to create a streamlined process for Social Service Practitioners (SSP) to write probable cause statements and obtain daytime and evening warrants. In addition to improving the process to obtain a warrant, DPSS/CSD partnered with the Riverside County Sheriff's Department to create consistent procedures for safe warrant execution.

**Grand Jury Finding #3:**

STAFFING PROCEDURES: This is a critical step in the process of investigating and determining what interventions may be required by the circumstances. The SSPs know they are required to keep their supervisors informed throughout the investigation and how decisions are made to "promote" or to close an investigation. This is termed "staffing a referral." The SSP is responsible for documenting the conversations, explaining the directives given, and the rationale for the decisions. The documentation is recorded into the Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS).

The Grand Jury did not identify any significant process issues with the "staffing a referral" process.

**Response to Grand Jury Finding #3:**

**Respondent agrees with the finding.**

**DPSS:**

DPSS/CSD Supervisors will continue to staff referrals with SSPs. Consultation between SSPs and Supervisors is a pivotal step in the support, development, and the decision-making process during investigations to ensure timely and quality assessments. Consultation, also known as "staffing," is a key practice within the Integrated Core Practice Model utilized by DPSS/CSD to ensure that the elements of accountability, workforce development, and engagement with the family are being met.

**Grand Jury Finding #4:**

THE REMOVAL PROCESS: SSPs who have undertaken actions to remove a child from a home due to safety factors feel that better support and communication with their supervisors, and/or regional managers, has made these kinds of actions less daunting than before. While these actions may never be an easy task, they expressed some relief that it can be accomplished in a less stressful and more confident manner.

The most common issue described by the SSPs is in the timing of the removals. Delays in placement or availability invariably create issues with the timing for the removal, and in providing a safe environment for a child at a critical time. In accordance with one of the recommendations cited in the 2019 External Review Analysis and Process Improvement report, a "Specialized Placement" extended its service hours to accommodate placement needs. However, some of the SSPs felt that "the placement unit could work quicker."

DPSS/CSD to evaluate the expansion of placement unit locations for children removed from the home due to safety factors. This would greatly assist SSPs in timely removals and provide a child a safe environment at a critical time. Implementation to be completed by end of fiscal year 2022-2023

**Response to Grand Jury Finding #4:**

**Respondent partially agrees with the finding.**

**DPSS:**

DPSS/CSD will continue to prioritize increasing the number of placement options and locations. Removal decisions are not delayed based on available placements, however, finding immediate placements due to the limited number of options particularly for children with complex needs is a challenge. Supporting SSPs in the removal of a child is a key practice for both supervisors and managers within the service regions.

**Grand Jury Finding #5:**

STRUCTURED DECISION MAKING (SDM): Safety and risk assessments are the primary functions of this system:

- a) Safety: a child is likely to be in immediate danger of serious harm/maltreatment, which requires a protective intervention, and
- b) Risk: characteristics associated with a greater likelihood of future system involvement. Risk Assessment identifies families with "Low, Moderate, High, or Very High" probabilities of future abuse or neglect.

In our interviews with SSPs regarding this process, and the SDM tool, they reported they are comfortable with the tool, believe it is effective and have confidence in the guidance it provides. It is the Grand Jury's opinion that no further "re-education" on the SDM is needed, but periodic refresher course should be required.

**Response to Grand Jury Finding #5:**

**Respondent agrees with the finding.**

**DPSS:**

The Structured Decision-Making tool will remain a vital component and serves as a guide to assist SSPs in making informed and consistent decisions throughout the life of a case. DPSS/CSD currently contracts with The Academy for Professional Excellence Child Welfare Development Services and partners with its Staff Development Division to offer and deploy introductory and advanced courses to include refresher trainings. Supervisors monitor the correct application of the tool and recommends targeted training, when needed.

**Grand Jury Finding #6:**

CASELOAD MANAGEMENT: The average caseloads, as reported by the SSPs we interviewed, were inconsistent throughout the interviews. What was consistent is that the number of cases a SSP is normally carrying is felt to be a too high, especially with the additional referrals assigned.

As noted earlier in this report, a Riverside County Board supervisor recognizes the "bone-crushing" caseloads on CPS.

The current strategies (Strike teams, Monday Workgroup meetings, "5-Day Referral" actions, etc.) are encouraging to the SSPs and may in the long run help to reduce, or at least contain their caseload at manageable levels.

The Grand Jury agrees with DPSS/CSD management that an increase in the number of additional positions in Investigative Services and Continuing Services would have significant impact on the reduction of caseload numbers per SSP.

**Response to Grand Jury Finding #6:**

**Respondent agrees with the finding.**

**DPSS:**

DPSS will continue to holistically review and update caseload guidelines for all social work units throughout the organization. In July 2019, DPSS/CSD established workload guidelines for the Investigative Services and Continuing Services programs in alignment with industry guidelines. DPSS/CSD established a line-of-sight dashboard to track workload, budget, and staffing levels (to include hiring and attrition information) which is regularly reviewed by the DPSS/CSD leadership team to ensure consistent workload management to include the distribution of work.

**Grand Jury Finding #7:**

TURNOVER RATE: The current average turnover rate of 32% makes it additionally challenging for DPSS/CSD management to effectively reduce the average caseloads for SSPs.

**Response to Grand Jury Finding #7:**

DPSS and Human Resources (HR) agree that a high turnover rate makes it difficult for DPSS/CSD management to effectively reduce caseloads and is developed a comprehensive Recruitment and Retention Plan that focuses on turnover strategies that include milestones and benchmarks.

DPSS established a Workforce Development Unit that partners with HR and UCR (Organizational Development and Culture Consultant.) This Unit has a singular focus of improving recruitment and retention outcomes. This cross-functional team, analyzes and tracks human resources data, compensation, develops, and analyzes staff satisfaction surveys, engages in strategic direction recommendations, and establishes benchmarks to highlight progress, challenges and makes real time recommendations.

The following steps have been taken to reduce turnover:

- Compensation: HR added a hard to recruit designation to DPSS/CSD SSP IIIs and supervisors which increased their salaries by 5.5%. The base for new hires was increased to compete with comparable counties. HR completed a market study (comparison conducted to benchmark to similar county) and additional pay recommendations are forthcoming.
- Recruitment: SSP III recruitments are now conducted as a continuous recruitment which enables HR to provide a certified list of candidates anytime the department requests one. The turnaround time from application to interview has been significantly reduced. Currently, HR is certifying a new list of candidates to the department approximately every two weeks. This has helped to ensure the candidate remains engaged with the recruitment process.
- Work Life Balance / Caseload: One of the foundations of caseload management is workload. DPSS/CSD division increased the number of SSP I/IIIs to assist SSP IIIs with performing functions to allow IS and CS SSP IIIs to concentrate on performing complex higher-level functions. As part of the recruitment strategy, the newly added SSP I/II positions will gain social work experience and skills to move into the higher-level position. In addition, DPSS/CSD engages in an "all hands-on deck" philosophy in which SSPs who are certified to work child welfare cases are utilized from other business units and divisions within DPSS. The Strike Team (which is now a permanent floater unit) prioritizes the division's workload and assists with equalizing the critical work.
- Environment/Culture: DPSS/CSD is a strength-based organization who focuses on; employee engagement, collaboration, and input with all levels of staff, performance, and talent retention. DPSS/CSD assesses the culture of the environment by conducting all staff feedback sessions, works with a strength-based trainer/coach, and works with an organizational development consultant from UCR who assists with conducting an annual organization satisfaction survey. Recently, 3,100 (75%) DPSS staff responded to the

employee satisfaction survey. In addition, County HR administers on-going surveys to probationary employees to assess the environment. The results of these surveys, along with HR data are utilized to communicate and implement strategies to improve the environment.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### **Grand Jury Recommendation #1:**

County Counsel to continue to support, guide and stay actively involved with ongoing training of SSPs, such as the monthly "Brown Bag" meetings, as well as continue monitoring court processes and law enforcement engagement with CPS.

### **Response to Grand Jury #1:**

**Recommendation has been implemented and will continue to be implemented.**

#### **County Counsel:**

The Child Welfare Division of the Office of County Counsel continues to prioritize training for DPSS/CSD.

Monthly *Brown Bag* trainings have been and continue to be hosted by the Office of County Counsel. These sessions are targeted to an audience of Social Service Practitioners who have been employed with DPSS/CSD for less than two years. While the *Brown Bag* program was originally developed for less experienced Social Service Practitioners, all DPSS/CSD employees are welcome, and trainings are geared to provide value regardless of seniority. In addition to a 45-minute presentation by a Deputy County Counsel on a relevant legal topic, attendees are also given the opportunity to inquire with a panel of County Counsel Deputies in attendance about any individual legal questions. The PowerPoint presentation by County Counsel Deputies, and any accompanying handouts, are delivered electronically to all attendees.

In addition to the *Brown Bag* program, the Child Welfare Division of County Counsel also produces *CoCo Talks* Recorded Trainings for DPSS/CSD. County Counsel Deputies record legally significant topics in 20- to 30-minute sessions. The recordings are made available on the DPSS/CSD intranet for DPSS/CSD staff to view at convenient times or when facing one of the legal issues addressed. The Office of County Counsel monitors legal developments to ensure that these recorded trainings are providing the most current legal advice.

The Child Welfare Division of the Office of County Counsel also hosts the *In-House Counsel* Program. These are meetings between two County Counsel Deputies and DPSS/CSD staff that are hosted monthly at each DPSS/CSD office location or virtually. *In-House Counsel* sessions are scheduled separately for the Desert Region, Diamond Valley, Metro, Mid-County, Southwest, Valley, West Corridor, YCR, and two sessions are held for Command Post. Social Service Practitioners and their supervisors can meet and staff any cases, investigations, or general questions with the attorney team present from County Counsel.

Furthermore, The Child Welfare Division of the Office of County Counsel presents a full-day introduction to the Social Service Practitioners' legal obligations at each DPSS/CSD Induction Training for new Social Service Practitioners. This training includes, but is not limited to, an overview of warrant drafting and execution process, an introduction to the legal responsibilities of



the Social Service Practitioners, an introduction to the court venue and procedures, as well as direction for Social Service Practitioners testimony preparation and legal writing.

Finally, the Child Welfare Chief County Counsel Deputies monitor every protective custody warrant as it moves through the process from submission to counsel for review, through submission to the magistrate, and execution by DPSS/CSD and law enforcement. Each of these warrant packages is carefully tracked and any potential problems are handled as they arise. The Deputy County Counsel is available to the reviewing judge to answer any legal questions posed by the court. A Deputy County Counsel and a Chief Deputy County Counsel from the Child Welfare Division are available at any time to interface with law enforcement as necessary if there are problems during execution. Furthermore, any patterns or systemic issues noted with any aspect of the warrant process are tracked and addressed by the Chief Deputy County Counsel and the DPSS/CSD Law Enforcement Liaison.

**DPSS:**

Combined with the response to the Recommendation #2.

**Grand Jury Recommendation #2:**

DPSS/CSD management to ensure all SSPs, not only those that are case carrying, are familiarized, and educated with the process of writing/completing a Probable Cause Statement. Implementation to be completed by end of fiscal year 2022-2023.

**Response to Grand Jury Recommendation #2:**

**Recommendation has been implemented and will continue to be implemented.**

**DPSS:**

The Child Welfare Division of the Office of County Counsel has been and will continue to deliver training and provide streamlined, consistent legal counsel and support to DPSS/CSD. All SSPs are provided with probable cause statement training during induction and have immediate access to practice videos for continued learning.

Child Welfare County Counsel Deputies are available twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, to assist Social Service Practitioners with legal questions, investigative questions, and seeking court intervention through protective custody warrants. As of February 2022, a single Deputy County Counsel is assigned to handle all daytime warrants countywide to ensure legal sufficiency of Probable Cause Statements and provide consistent legal advice to DPSS/CSD. In addition, other County Counsel Deputies remain on-call to provide further support during high volume periods and to ensure the most prompt and expeditious response to warrant review and issuance.

The County Counsel Deputies within the Child Welfare Division rotate on a weekly basis to provide coverage after-hours, on weekends, and holidays to assist DPSS/CSD staff with legal questions and assistance with obtaining protective custody warrants. The Child Welfare Division of the Office of County Counsel continues to prioritize training for DPSS/CSD.

Monthly Brown Bag trainings are hosted by the Office of County Counsel. These sessions target an audience of Social Service Practitioners who have been employed with DPSS/CSD for less than two years. While the Brown Bag program was originally developed for less experienced

Social Service Practitioners, all DPSS/CSD employees are welcome, and trainings are geared to provide value regardless of seniority. In addition to a 45-minute presentation by a Deputy County Counsel on a relevant legal topic, attendees are also given the opportunity to inquire with a panel of County Counsel Deputies in attendance about any individual legal questions. The PowerPoint presentation by County Counsel Deputies, and any accompanying handouts, are delivered electronically to all attendees.

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Furthermore, The Child Welfare Division of the Office of County Counsel presents a full-day introduction to the Social Service Practitioners' legal obligations at each DPSS/CSD Induction class. This training includes, but is not limited to, an overview of warrant drafting and execution process, an introduction to the legal responsibilities of the Social Service Practitioners, an introduction to the court venue and procedures, as well as direction for Social Service Practitioners on testimony preparation and legal writing.

Finally, the Child Welfare Chief County Counsel Deputies monitor every protective custody warrant as it moves through the process from submission to counsel for review, through submission to the magistrate, and execution by DPSS/CSD and law enforcement. Each of these warrant packages is carefully tracked and any potential problems are handled as they arise. The Deputy County Counsel is available to the reviewing judge to answer any legal questions posed by the court. A Deputy County Counsel and a Chief Deputy County Counsel from the Child Welfare Division are available at any time to interface with law enforcement as necessary if there are problems during execution. Furthermore, any patterns or systemic issues noted with any aspect of the warrant process are tracked and addressed by the Chief Deputy County Counsel and the DPSS/CSD Law Enforcement Liaison.

**Grand Jury Recommendation #3:**

DPSS/CSD to evaluate the expansion of placement unit locations for children removed from the home due to safety factors. This would greatly assist SSPs in timely removals and provide a child a safe environment at a critical time. Implementation to be completed by end of fiscal year 2022-2023

**Response to Grand Jury Recommendation #3:**

**Recommendation has been implemented and will continue to be implemented.**

**DPSS:**

DPSS/CSD continues to prioritize increasing placement options and locations. Placements options, particularly for children with complex needs, is a challenge. It is noted, however, that removal decisions are not delayed pending a placement option.

A third unit was added to the Placement team to assist with placement searches and efforts are underway to secure existing technology to enhance the placement search process.

Efforts to expand placement options include:

- Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI): QPI is a process to strengthen foster care and improving permanency and well-being for children. The first option for children removed from care is a safe placement with a relative, when possible. CSDs goal is to increase the number of relative care placements and decrease the number of dependent children placed in congregate care and foster family agency homes. DPSS/CSD is expanding its efforts and is working with Casey Family Foundation to assist the department with improving outcomes involving relative placements.
- DPSS/CSD is also working to increase the number of available foster families by contracting with Foster All to engage the Faith in Motion (FIM) community and local non-profits to assist with Foster Parent recruitments.
- Emergency Bed contracts: Established a series of emergency bed contracts with providers to accept placement of a youth in an emergency who require a higher level of care and support.
- Complex Care Funding: Accessed and received over \$2.5 million in State Complex Care Funding to help support individualized placements for youth. This expanded funding will increase placement options for youth with complex needs.
- DPSS/CSD, in collaboration with the Department of Probation, the Department of Behavior Health, and San Bernardino County will submit a response to the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), Children's Crisis Continuum Pilot Program Request for Proposal for additional funding in building out the placement continuum.
- Welcome Center (WC): Opened a center to address the immediate placement needs, as a temporary measure specifically designed to minimize the impact of the trauma of removal from parental custody by providing safety, care, comfort, and therapeutic support while the best and most appropriate placement is coordinated. Second District Supervisor Karen Spiegel allocated \$2 million in ARPA Funding and the Riverside County Regional Park and Open-Space District Parks joined in the effort to build new homes to house the future location of the Welcome Center. In addition, the BOS approved the local funding and authorized the agreement with Seneca Family Agencies to administer the needed services at the WC for five-years at the aggregate cost of \$31,013,000.
- Engaging the California Department of Social Services (CDSS): Leveraged support from

CDSS by engaging in Technical Assistance for youth in which locating an appropriate placement match has been difficult, as well as advocating and submitting specialized rates requests for providers who have tailored their program to meet the needs of the youth. DPSS/CSD will continue to work with CDSS on advocating for legislative changes to support innovative placement types, designed for youth where no placement option currently exists.

**Grand Jury Recommendation #4:**

Human Resources to develop a plan to address and reduce SSP voluntary turnover and number of losses during the probationary period to significantly reduce the overall turnover. Plan should include recommendations related to compensation, health care packages and career development, as well as other retention strategies. Plan to be submitted to the Executive Office not later than December 31, 2022.

**Response to Grand Jury Recommendation #4:**

**Recommendation has been implemented and will continue to be implemented.**

**Human Resources:**

The Executive Office, Department of Public Social Services, and the Human Resources Department have been working collaboratively to identify and implement methods to reduce turnover within the Social Services Practitioner (SSP) series. Additionally, the below improvements are in progress:

**Compensation and Benefits**

On May 10, 2022, the Board of Supervisors directed the County Executive Office to work with Department Heads, and the Human Resources Department to improve recruitment, hiring and retention practices Countywide, and return to the Board of Supervisors in 90 days with preliminary findings and recommendations. The Executive Office reported back on this matter on August 30, 2022. As part of the review, the County initiated a comprehensive third-party analysis of the County's benefit offerings. The benefit review performed included an analysis of the County's current offerings for medical, dental, and vision plans, flexible benefit contribution plans, medical subsidy, medical waiver, Short Term Disability, Long Term Disability, Life Insurance, Flexible Spending Account (FSA) and the 401(a) and 457 Deferred Compensation Plans.

The initial findings indicate that Riverside County is below market in Health contributions when compared to neighboring jurisdictions. Additional research is underway to further assess potential adjustments, implementation strategy, and cost. Any adjustments identified for implementation will be applied Countywide, and therefore will directly benefit the SSP series.

Additionally, under the guidance and direction of the Executive Office, the Human Resources Department is actively evaluating the County's compensation practices and developing an improved overall pay philosophy, with the goal of creating a pay structure that allows the County to be more flexible and proactive in a competitive job market and enable departments to better retain qualified employees. The philosophy will utilize new "Pay Scales" in line with the standards in the industry, which when implemented, will benefit the County in further distinguishing itself as an employer of choice, and will thereby benefit the SSP series.

While the compensation strategy is under evaluation, multiple targeted compensation improvement tactics have been implemented for the SSP series. For example, just recently, on July 12, 2022, the Board of Supervisors approved the recommendation to adjust the minimum salary range for all Service Employees International Union (SEIU) classifications (of which the SSP series is represented), as stated in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) 2020 - 2024 between the County of Riverside and SEIU under *Article 30, Section 3: Minimum Salary Market Adjustment*. This MOU provision focused specifically on the minimum of the salary range for SEIU classifications and brought classification salary ranges to market competitive positions for comparable work in local neighboring jurisdictions. Furthermore, in the coming weeks, the Board will consider another salary range adjustment for the SSP series. If approved, this request will place the County's salary range for the SSP series in one of the top leading positions in comparison to other neighboring Counties, which will be a recruitment attractor and long-term retention tool.

Following the August 30, 2022, response to the Recruitment, Hiring, and Retention Board item, the Board of Supervisors directed the Executive Office to review the benefits package, health contributions, and overall compensation model and return with necessary adjustments to the MOUs within 90 days. Thus, modifications to the existing compensation and benefits structure impacting SSPs and all County classifications are under review at present.

#### Other Retention Strategies

One area of renewed focus Countywide is evaluating the level of job satisfaction among the employee population, which will also be a key retention strategy for the SSP series. With more than 22,000 employees across 42 departments, job satisfaction with long-term retention in critical functional areas such as social services are of paramount importance. Employee job satisfaction is one of the strongest predictors of long-term high performance, engagement and ultimately, retention within an organization. The County presently captures job satisfaction through Exit Interviews by offering an interview to departing employees upon separation, which is a requirement of Board Policy C-22, Exit Interview. The purpose of this policy is to elicit feedback as to why the employee is leaving the County and provide them an opportunity to share any potentially unresolved concerns. The exit survey covers a wide range of topics, including:

- Reasons the employee was initially attracted to work for the County;
- The aspects of their job they liked and disliked;
- Whether or not the County did or did not meet their expectations;
- The factors that led the employee to leave the County;
- Areas the County can improve upon;
- The employee's new employer (if applicable);
- What the new employer offers that the County does not;
- Whether the employee would consider returning to County employment in the future.

For these questions, there is freedom to write narrative responses. Additionally, there are built in responses that are relevant to a wide variety of areas. These areas include responses related to the working environment, growth opportunity, leadership, compensation, work/life balance, County culture, etc. Feedback from the Exit Interviews is shared with department executives so that departments can research any concerns listed and identify areas for improvement.

Exit Interviews are one tool the Human Resources Department uses to gather valuable feedback from employees that can be reported on. However, these individuals have already made the decision to leave the County. It is evident with the SSP series that information in real time would

be more beneficial so that voluntary attrition can be directly targeted and reduced. Gathering feedback while employees are still employed with the County through varied Employee Life Cycle Surveys will continue to help ensure any issues relating to job satisfaction are identified earlier and, when necessary, action can be taken to improve employees' experiences, reduce turnover, and support retention.

The County has recently deployed additional Employee Life Cycle Surveys. The County will be launching a Job Satisfaction Survey Countywide in the fall of 2022. The last Countywide survey of this type was completed more than ten years ago. While individual departmental Job Satisfaction Surveys have been deployed upon request, compiling job satisfaction for all County employees across all units and classifications will allow departments to review and analyze the feedback and identify opportunities for improvement, especially in difficult to retain classifications such as the SSP. Additionally, use of the New Hire Survey is a mechanism to evaluate and improve the employee experience, and this is especially true in critical functions such as social service provision. In July 2020, the Human Resources Department implemented New Hire Surveys to gather feedback from new employees at three and six months after hire. Additionally, in January 2021, the one-year after hire survey was implemented. Since implementation, close to 3,500 responses have been received. The surveys allow new employees to rate their level of employment satisfaction, with a freeform question at the end allowing the employee to provide an open-ended response. Information is obtained in five key job satisfaction categories: employee's role, department and County, manager and supervisor, orientation, and overall job satisfaction. These survey results are provided on a quarterly basis to department executives for review and action.

The continued use of the Exit Interview, combined with the deployment of a Countywide Job Satisfaction Survey and varied Employee Life Cycle Surveys will directly benefit the SSP series turnover. The availability of information, combined with a heightened focus and improved ability to identify common opportunities for continuous improvement, issues, and trends will allow the County to implement varied tactics to improve the attrition.

**DPSS:**

Please see response to Finding #7.

**Grand Jury Recommendation #5:**

Board of Supervisors create an Ad Hoc committee to study and propose an action plan for CPS staffing levels to drive down the average caseloads, including approval of additional approved positions for Investigative Services and Continuing Services for fiscal year 2023-2024 as follows:

- a) Investigative Services SSP III: 70-75 new positions
- b) Continuing Services SSP I and II: 20-25 new positions

**Response to Grand Jury Recommendation #5:**

**Recommendation has been implemented and will continue to be implemented.**

**Board of Supervisors and DPSS:**

The Board of Supervisors (BOS) has an existing Ad Hoc committee established to improve outcomes for vulnerable children and adults. The recommendation to study and propose an

action plan for DPSS/CSD staffing levels to drive down the average caseloads will be included in the scope of work to be done through the existing Ad Hoc committee.

In FY 19/20, the Board of Supervisors approved \$3.17 million and an additional \$3.46 million for FY 20/21 to increase budgeted staffing levels. This investment to add these additional new positions was provided to decrease the caseloads to align with lower caseload guidelines.

Based on extensive analysis, it was determined that DPSS/CSD has the funding to support a manageable caseload guideline for IS and CS staff. However, the department has not been successful with filling to its budgeted targets because of low candidate recruitment pools and high turnover rates. The Recruitment and Retention plan developed is integral to reaching and sustaining the targeted caseload levels. DPSS/CSD's recruitment and retention work plan addresses focused and intention strategies to address recruitment goals and objectives and turnover rate.

**Grand Jury Recommendation #6:**

DPSS/CSD to prepare a summary report on caseload management that illustrates how the actions they have taken have been successful or not. This summary report is to be submitted to the Executive Office no later than June 30, 2024.

**Response to Grand Jury Recommendation #6:**

**Recommendation has not been implemented but will be implemented no later than June 30, 2024.**

**DPSS:**

DPSS-CSD will prepare a summary report on caseload management that illustrates how the actions taken have been successful or not. Approaching improvement efforts through a continuous quality improvement lens is the management philosophy utilized by DPSS-CSD. Within this process, DPSS-CSD currently utilizes a Line of Sight - Key Performance Indicator Dashboard to track progress.

