

# SOCIAL SERVICES AGENCY

## Department of Children and Family Services

Status Update #6

Findings of the State Auditor's Report to the Joint  
Committee on Legislative Audits

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*Guided by Collaboration, Continuous Quality  
Improvement, and Transparency*

Alameda County Board of Supervisors' Special Meeting

March 10, 2026

Presented by:

**Representative, Alameda County Behavioral Health Department**

**Andrea Ford**, Agency Director, Alameda County Social Services Agency

**Michelle Love**, Assistant Agency Director, Department of Children and Family Services

**Jennifer Uldricks**, Sr. Management Analyst, Department of Children and Family Services



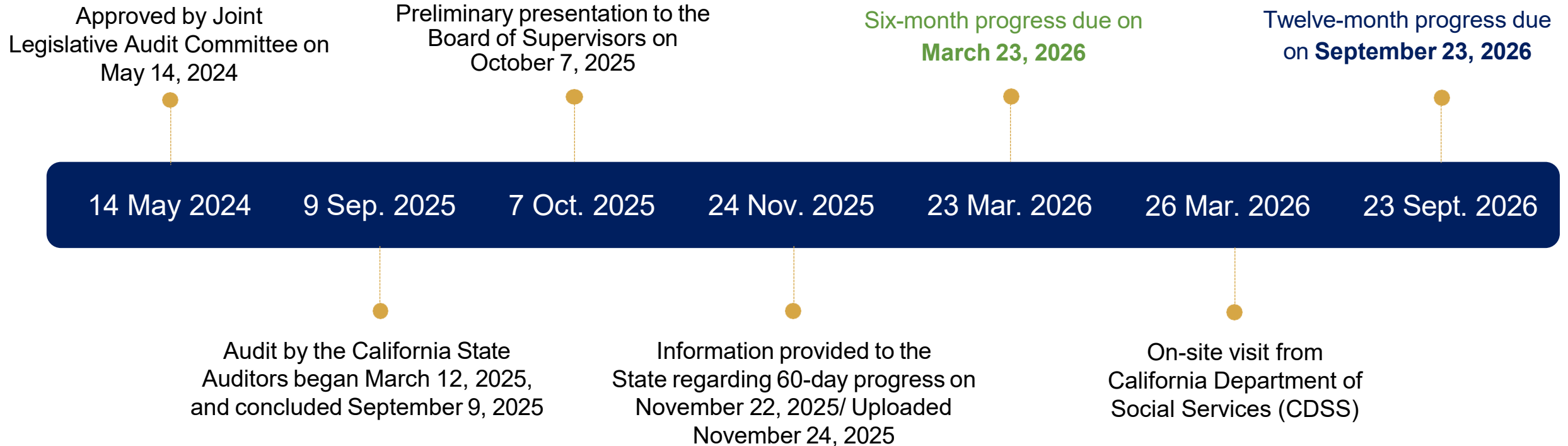


# AGENDA



- Review of the 2024-108 Audit Report Timeline
- California Department of Social Services (CDSS) On-Site Visit
- Partnership with Alameda County's Behavioral Health Department
- Follow-up from Senator Dr. Wahab's 2.27.2026 Task Force Meeting
- Hiring and Recruitment Efforts
- Department Highlights and Opportunities
- Progress on Addressing Recommendations
- DCFS Legislative Opportunities

# Review of the 2024-108 Audit Report Timeline



# California Department of Social Services (CDSS) On-Site Visit

Purpose is to review operations of the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS)

On-site visit will consist of:

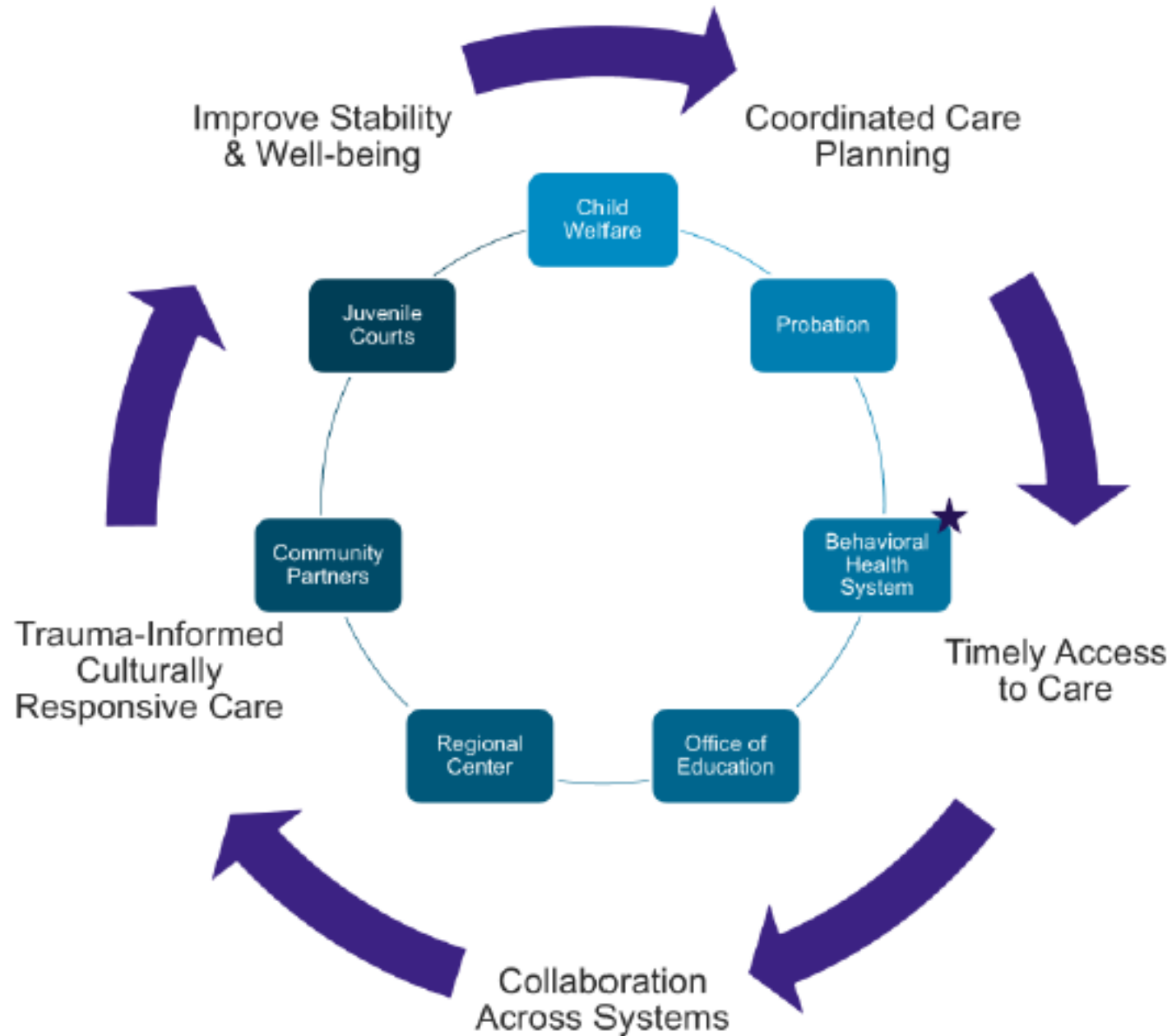
- Opening and Exit Conference with department leadership
- Two focus groups with Child Welfare Workers (CWWs) from multiple programs
- One focus group with Child Welfare Supervisors (CWSs) from multiple programs
- Fifteen individual interviews with various classifications of child welfare staff from multiple programs
- Review of case and referrals

Following completion of the review, the Department will receive a corrective action plan with next steps, if any.

# Strengthening Partnerships with Alameda County's Behavioral Health System

Collaboration between Foster & Behavioral Health Systems of Care

# Children's System of Care Ecosystem



# Collaboration with the Broader Behavioral Health System

Interagency  
Coordinating  
Council  
(ICC)



Interagency  
Leadership  
Team (ILT)



PROBLEM SOLVING

ILT Sub-  
Committee  
**COORDINATION**

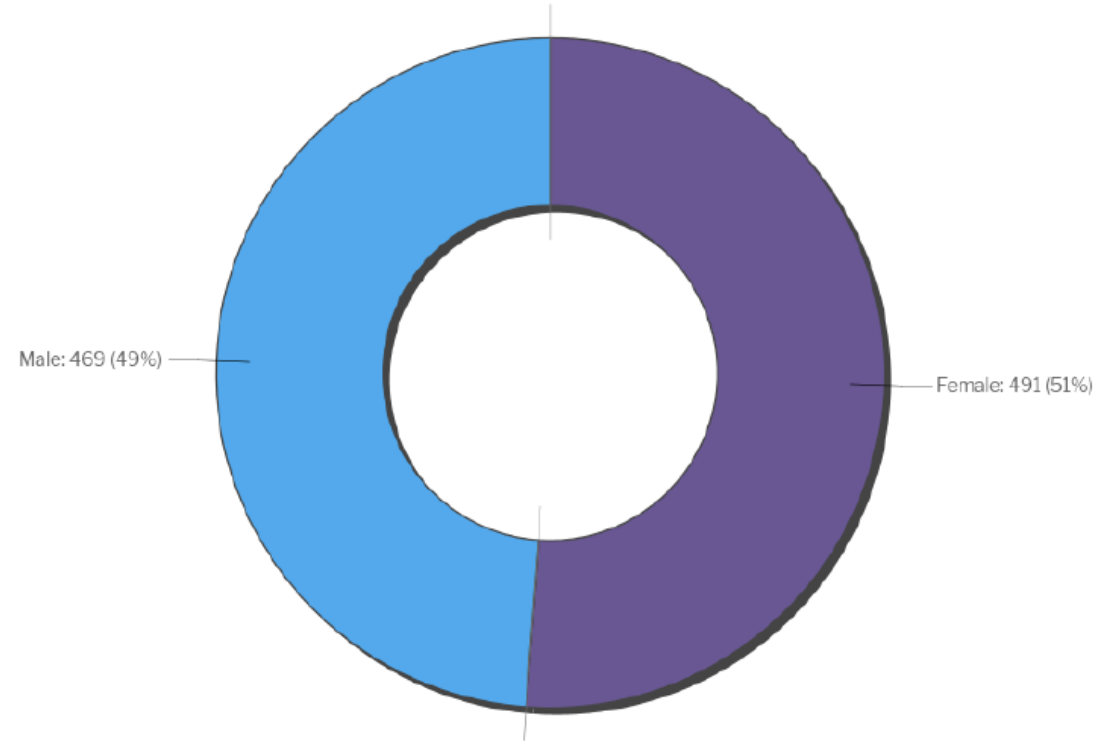


# 2024/2025 Demographics of Foster Youth Served

## Age of CYASOC Client

Fiscal Year	Age Group	Clients	% of Clients
FY 2024-2025	Ages 0-5	174	18%
	Ages 6-12	244	25%
	Ages 13-17	340	35%
	Ages 18-25	202	21%
		<b>960</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Gender Identity

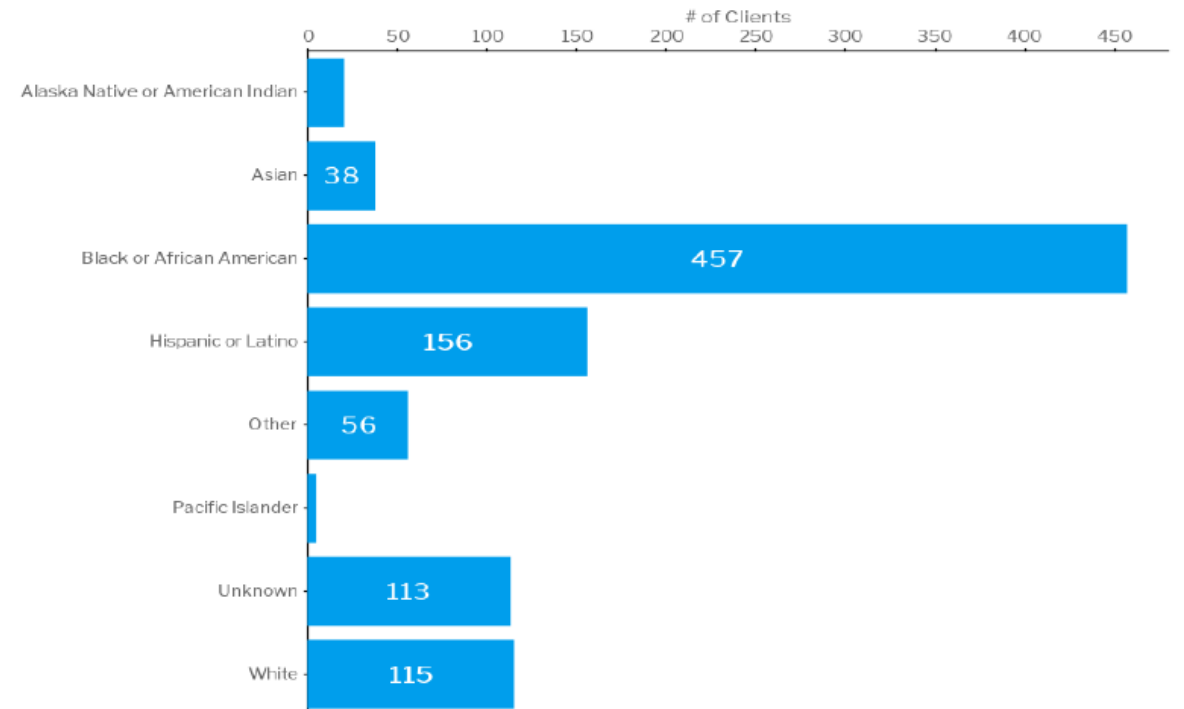


# 2024/2025 Demographics of Foster Youth Served

## Region of the County

Fiscal Year	Region	Clients	% of Clients
FY 2024-2025	1. North	392	41%
	2. Central	180	19%
	3. South	45	5%
	4. East	38	4%
	5. Out of County	305	32%
		<b>960</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Ethnicity



# High Needs Youth Committee: Behavioral Health's Focus

Focuses system efforts on supporting individuals with **complex behavioral health needs**, usually involving youth with placement instability and multi-system involvement.

General wellness, trauma-related supports, community resources designed to stabilize or ensure ongoing wellness.

**\*Coordinated care and referral access points** *increased* over past three (3) years:

- Direct referrals to School Based Providers in network with ACBHD;
- Direct referrals to Community Based network providers; and
- Referrals to ACCESS Division for referral and system connection.

# Coordinated Caree & Timely Access Strategies

## Systemwide Referral Pathways:

- Streamline referrals, improve service access, strengthen coordination directly with social services to facilitate more access through direct referrals (in progress for three years) and **strengthened by CalAIM.**
- **NO WRONG DOOR**

## Objective Arts Platform: Shared Assessment Tools

- Target completion date Q1 Fiscal Year 2026-2027
- Goals: improve coordination of assessments, integrated case planning, alignment of treatment and service planning.

## Strengthening System Navigation: ACBHD Behavioral Health Liaison Role developed

## Data Infrastructure (Joint Effort between, ACBHD, DCFS, & ACPD)

### *Shared Referral Tracking System under development*

- Track behavioral Health Referrals
- Monitor Timely Access
- Identify Services Gaps
- Support Data-Informed System Improvements
- Monitor Referral Trends

# Behavioral Health System Provider Networks

153 Behavioral Health Service Contracts, with 84 Community Based Organizations (CBOs)

Providers located throughout Alameda County, and across California to support out of county placements.

Community Clinics, \***School-Based Programs**, & Out-Of-County placements, when necessary.

School Based Programs:

180 School Campuses across twelve (12) Alameda County School Districts.

# Follow-up form Senator Dr. Wahab's 2.27.2026 Task Force Meeting

## Backlog of Open Referrals

- The Department currently has 1,497 open referrals.
- The backlog peaked at ~3,500 in March 2024 and has been reduced by approximately 57% through active effort.
- The oldest referral has been open since 2021

## Emergency Response (ER) Daily Staffing Averages

- Daily ER capacity fluctuates between ~10–14 active workers across shifts.
- December 2025 (9.7), January 2026 (15.6), and February 2026 (11.3)
- Bachelor's-level workers (CWW-Is) have shown higher retention success in ongoing case management programs.

# Follow-up from Senator Dr. Wahab's 2.27.2026 Task Force Meeting - *Continued*

## Dashboard Transparency and Data Integrity

- The dashboard is primarily powered by data that has been extracted from CWS/CMS via one of three tools.
  - SafeMeasures reports developed by Evident Change
  - Internally developed reports querying CWS/CMS utilizing Business Objects
  - Reports developed by the California Child Welfare Indicators Project (CCWIP)
- Data is refreshed monthly for most metrics.
- Public Dashboard verbiage has been updated

# Follow-up form Senator Dr. Wahab's 2.27.2026 Task Force Meeting - *Continued*

## Documentation, Court Reports, and Quality of Notes

- Templates were developed to include service referral dates, monthly child visits, mental health services tracking, and interagency collaboration. (completed November 2024)
- Supervisors were trained on the new template and a revised contact note policy on November 6, 2025
- An investigation narrative setup process (takes 45 mins in system) is now being pre-populated by case assistant support staff

# Follow-up from Senator Dr. Wahab's 2.27.2026 Task Force Meeting – *Continued*

## Accountability Mechanisms

- Meet and Confer began January 12, 2026.
- Supervisors accompany staff on home visits, with the goal of formalizing this more systematically.

## MOUs and External Partnerships

- Family finding contract with Victor Community Services expected to launch April 1, 2026.

## Hiring and Recruitment Efforts

Recruitment Efforts for Bachelor's and Master's Level Child Welfare Workers

- The UC Berkeley Social Welfare Career Fair Tuesday, March 17, 2026
- The Alameda County Social Services Annual Fair Chance Job Fair, Friday, April 24, 2026
- County of Alameda Job Fair, Friday, April 24, 2026



# Department Highlights & Opportunities

## Celebrating Successful Client Outcomes

- Reunification breakfast on April 22, 2026
- Foster Care Month & Caregiver Appreciation Dinner on May 15, 2026
- Bringing Families Home (BFH) is currently serving **69 families** with ongoing rental subsidies and case management support. Since July 2024, DCFS has also approved **104 requests totaling \$280k** for additional housing-related supports for one-time rental assistance, security deposits, and furniture.

## Collaboration

- Retreat between the Interagency Leadership Team and the Interagency Coordinating Council on March 5, 2026
- Eight \$25k Microgrants given to providers for the prevention and intervention of human trafficking in Alameda County.
- Established a MOU with the Consulate General of Mexico to support child welfare cases involving Mexican minors
- Contract continues partnership with Catholic Charities to help foster youth with Special Immigrant Juvenile Status

## Continuous Quality Improvement

- Existing System Improvement Plan (SIP) included action plans to address: timely investigation of referrals, workforce retention, and expanding family finding and engagement.
- Existing quarterly management dashboard process in place since 2017. Suite of dashboard revised in 2024 to track emergency response metrics, workforce retention, youth with complex care needs/overstays at the TrSCF, timely child welfare services, and permanency for youth in care 24 months or longer.
- Will integrate additional metrics relevant to audit recommendations into this process.

## Transparency

- Relevant information (e.g. presentation materials) and audit dashboard/updates are available on the agency website.

# Progress on Addressing Recommendations

## Timeline

Sep. 2025   Oct. 2025   Nov. 2025   Dec. 2025   Jan. 2026   Feb. 2026   Mar. 2026   Apr. 2026   May 2026   Jun. 2026   Jul. 2026   Aug. 2026   Sep. 2026   Oct. 2026

**Recommendation 1:**

Timely Supervisory review and approval of Emergency Response Investigations.



In Progress

**Recommendations 2 :**

Review the status of referrals & identify impediments to Emergency Response Unit timely referral investigations and completions



In Progress

**Recommendation 3:**

Develop strategies to address impediments to timeliness in referrals and investigation completion.



In Progress

**Recommendation 4:**

Survey staff to identify impediments to retention and recruitment.

*Detailed information is included in the appendix of the presentation*

# Progress on Addressing Recommendations *Cont.*

## Timeline

Sep. 2025   Oct. 2025   Nov. 2025   Dec. 2025   Jan. 2026   Feb. 2026   Mar. 2026   Apr. 2026   May 2026   Jun. 2026   Jul. 2026   Aug. 2026   Sep. 2026   Oct. 2026

**Recommendation 4:**

Survey staff to identify impediments to retention and recruitment.



**Recommendations 5 :**

Hire additional Bachelor’s Level Child Welfare Workers for the Emergency Response Program.



**Recommendation 6:**

Make shadowing mandatory for new employees.



# Progress on Addressing Recommendations *Cont.*

## Timeline

Sep. 2025   Oct. 2025   Nov. 2025   Dec. 2025   Jan. 2026   Feb. 2026   Mar. 2026   Apr. 2026   May 2026   Jun. 2026   Jul. 2026   Aug. 2026   Sep. 2026   Oct. 2026

**Recommendation 7 :** Ensure documentation of timely services for foster youth.

✓  
Successfully Implemented



**Recommendation 8:** Update the Children and Youth System of Care (AB 2083) MOU to provide for additional data sharing.

●  
In Progress



**Recommendation 9:** Identify, locate, and notify all relatives within 30 days of removal.

✓  
Successfully Implemented



# Progress on Addressing Recommendations *Cont.*

## Timeline

Sep. 2025   Oct. 2025   Nov. 2025   Dec. 2025   Jan. 2026   Feb. 2026   Mar. 2026   Apr. 2026   May 2026   Jun. 2026   Jul. 2026   Aug. 2026   Sep. 2026   Oct. 2026

**Recommendation 10:**

Update System Improvement Plan to include provisions for sibling engagement when siblings not placed together

✓  
Successfully Implemented



**Recommendations 11:**

Develop policies and procedures to track and minimize Transitional Shelter Care Facility (TrSCF) overstay.

✓  
Successfully Implemented



**Recommendation 12:** Implement policies & procedures to ensure quarterly evaluation of Transitional Shelter Care Facility performance

●  
In Progress



# Progress on Addressing Recommendations *Cont.*

## Timeline

Sep. 2025   Oct. 2025   Nov. 2025   Dec. 2025   Jan. 2026   Feb. 2026   Mar. 2026   Apr. 2026   May 2026   Jun. 2026   Jul. 2026   Aug. 2026   Sep. 2026   Oct. 2026

**Recommendation 13:**

Develop and document a process to track core and continuing training.



**Recommendations 14:**

Establish a process to hold supervisors and workers accountable for completing training hours.



**Recommendation 15:** Ensure all contracts include Results Based Accountability (RBA) measures, including a timeliness performance metric for service provision.



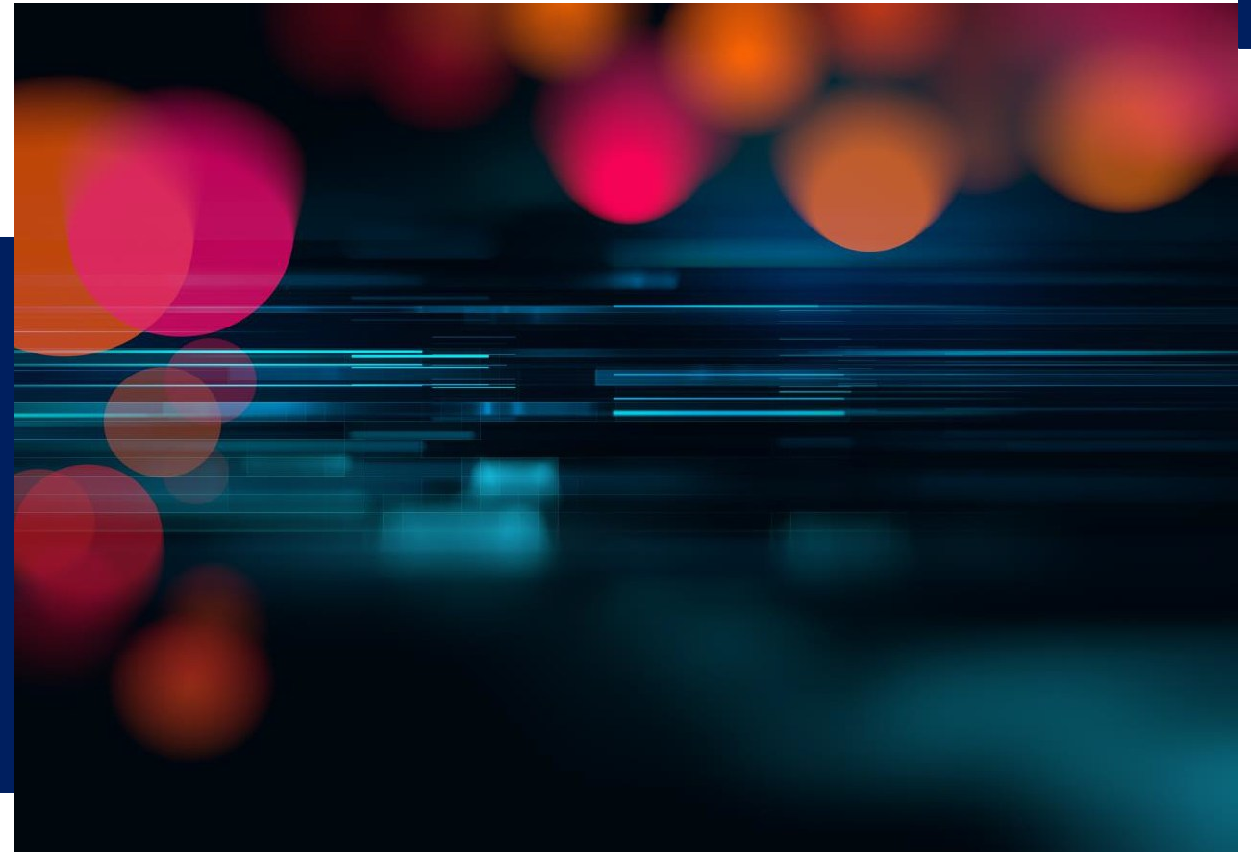
# Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Legislative Opportunities

- Explore alignment with the federal One Child, One Placement philosophy. This will require expanding specialized placement capacity and treatment resources for youth with complex needs. By building a continuum that prevents unnecessary placement changes and supports youth in the least restrictive, most stable environment possible, we can ensure that young people experience continuity, stabilize more effectively, and exit the system with stronger long-term outcomes.
- **AB 1846:** Strengthen ability to place with relatives throughout the dependency process.

# Questions?

**Andrea Ford**, Agency Director

**Michelle Love**, Assistant Agency Director,  
Department of Children & Family Services



# Thank you.