



Alameda County
Social Services Agency

A safety net. A way forward.

SOCIAL SERVICES AGENCY

Department of Children and Family Services' (DCFS') Status Update #9 on the Findings of the State Auditor's Report to the Joint Committee on Legislative Audits

Guided by Collaboration, Continuous Quality Improvement, and Transparency

Alameda County Board of Supervisors' Regular Meeting

June 2, 2026

Presented by:

Andrea Ford, Agency Director, Alameda County Social Services Agency

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

Agenda

- **Review of the 2024-108 Audit Report Timeline**
- **Follow-up from Previous Task Force Meeting**
 - California State Auditor presentation
- **California Department of Social Services (CDSS) On-site Visit**
- **Information Disseminated at 4/10/26 Task Force and 4/27/26 Social Services Committee**
- **Open Referral Investigations “Emergency Response”**
- **Child Welfare Worker Staffing Update**
- **Hiring Bachelor’s Level Child Welfare Workers**
- **Child Welfare Supervisor Staffing**
- **Child Welfare Training Hours**
- **Open Referral Investigations Over Time From DCFS Dashboard**

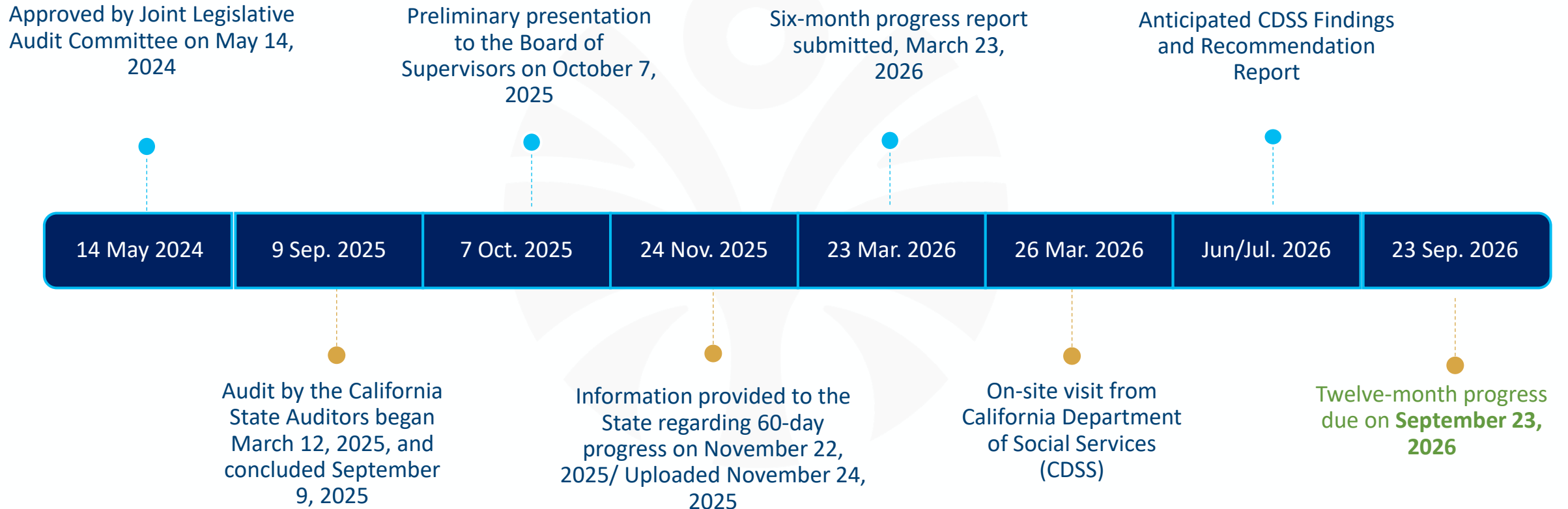


Agenda Continued

- **2025 Survey of DCFS Staff**
 - TeamFirst Assessment of Safety Culture and Next Steps
 - Survey Insights and A Way Forward-Update
- **Department Highlights**
- **Status of Implementation of Recommendations**
- **Collaboration with Systems Serving Children**
- **Interagency Timeline (AB2083)**
 - The Next Iteration of AB2083
- **Continued Recruitment Outreach**
- **Caregiver Appreciation Dinner**
- **Appendix**
 - Glossary of Frequently Used Terms
 - Audit Recommendations



Review of the 2024-108 Audit Report Timeline



California State Auditor Presentation at 5/15/2026

Task Force Meeting

- The California State Auditor presented an update following the Department's 6-month submission on the implementation status for all fifteen recommendations.
- The presentation outlined the audit's next steps:
 - Recommendation follow-up (annually, over the next 3 years)
 - Implemented staff comms channel: AlamedaRecs@auditor.ca.gov
 - Future consideration
 - Additional onsite audit work (per Govt Code 8546.1(d))
 - To better evaluate implementation status
 - Evaluating California Department of Social Services' Oversight Activities at Alameda (per Govt Code 8546.5 (a)).

California Department of Social Services (CDSS)

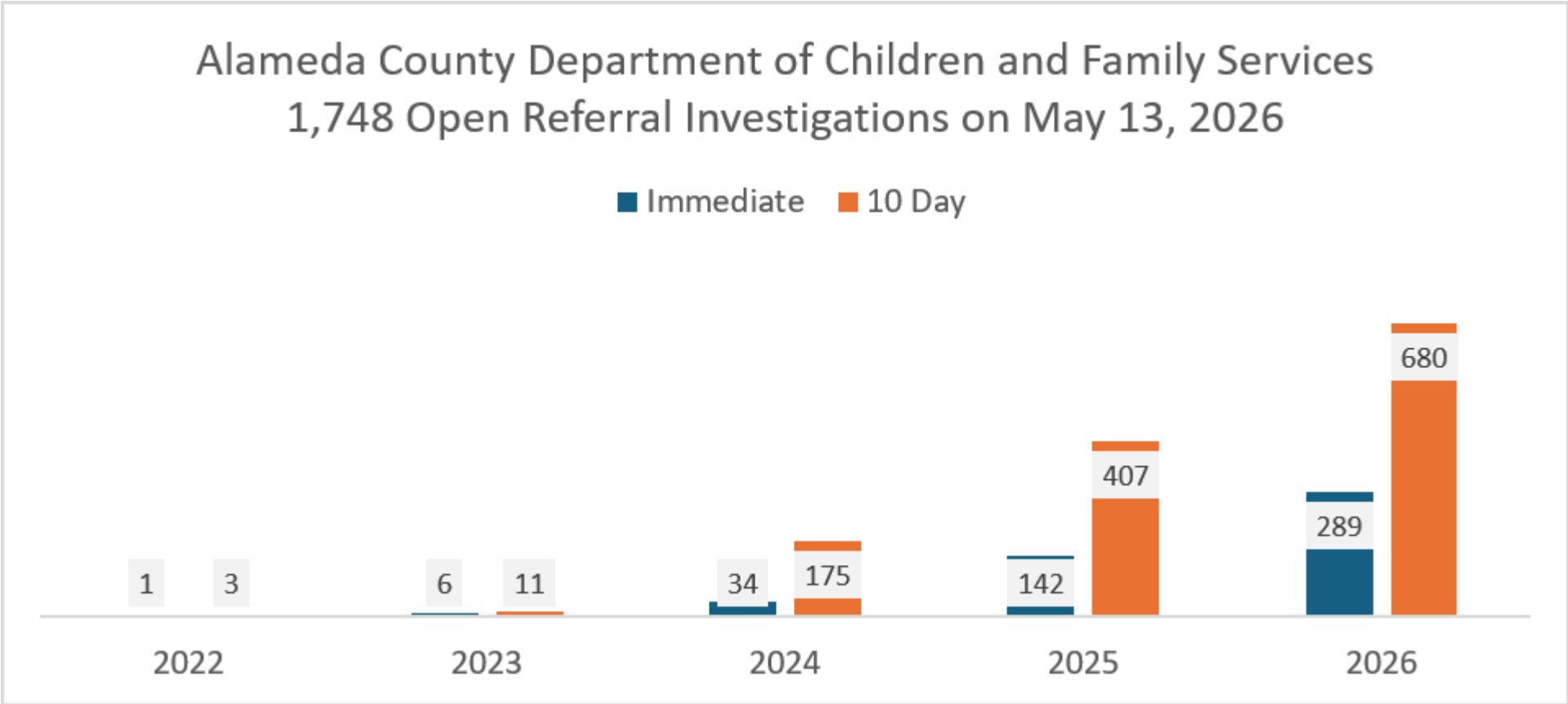
Onsite Review

- The Onsite visit occurred on March 26, 2026, as scheduled.
- During the onsite visit, CDSS conducted:
 - Focus groups with 16 Child Welfare Workers and 10 Child Welfare Supervisors
 - Interviews with 15 Child Welfare Workers
 - An entrance conference with 13 DCFS Program Managers and Division Directors
- In addition to the interviews, CDSS conducted a case review on April 21, 2026, of a combination of cases and referrals open from July 1, 2025 – March 13, 2026.
- Following the completion of the review, the DCFS will receive a Report of Findings and Recommendations for review and response within 12 weeks from the date of the onsite visit.

Information Disseminated at the 4/10/26 Task Force Meeting and 4/27/26 AC Social Services Committee - How concerns and complaints are addressed

- The Department addresses concerns and complaints as follows
 - Complaints or concerns that rise to the level of a civil rights violation are sent to ACSSA's Human Resources for investigation and resolution
 - CFS Client Concerns are received from several portals:
 - Phone calls or letters to the Assistant Agency Director of the Department of Children and Family Services.
 - Agency-wide client concern emails may be sent to clientconcern@acgov.org
 - Depending on the nature of the client concern, the issue may be reviewed by the Child Welfare Worker of record, Child Welfare Supervisors, Program Managers, or Division Directors.
- CDSS has several ways for clients and staff to file complaints about a worker or the agency
 - Social Workers (Child Welfare Workers in Alameda County) can share their concerns at 1-844-796-6283 or AB1978Hotline@dss.ca.gov
 - Foster youth can also contact the California Office of the Foster Care Ombudsperson at 1-877-846-1602 or fosteryouthhelp@dss.ca.gov.

Open Referral Investigations “Emergency Response”



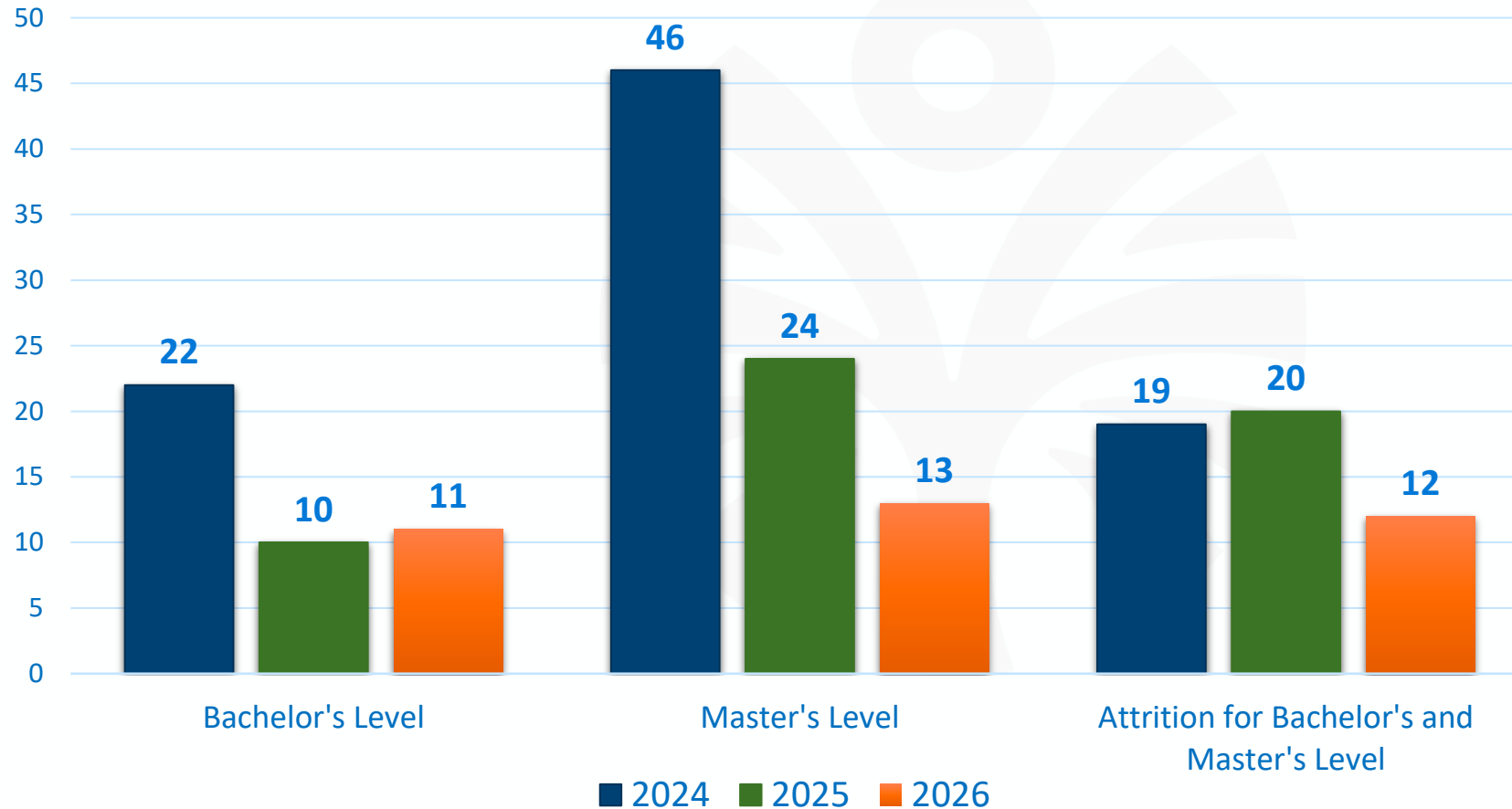
↑ 7.2% Increase in open referrals since 4/6/26 update

↑ 47.6% increase in investigated referral volume in March 2026 and 24% increase in investigated referral volume in April 2026 compared to the 2025 average

↓ 11.4% decrease in the number of referrals open 1 year or longer

370 referrals pending closure

Child Welfare Worker Staffing Update (Bachelor's and Master's Levels)



CWW II Filing Deadlines for Continuous Exams

- July 15, 2026
- September 15, 2026
- November 16, 2026

Current Vacancy Rate as of May 2026

Child Welfare Worker
25.6%

Hiring Bachelor's Level Child Welfare Workers

Bachelor's Level Child Welfare Worker Staffing in DCFS

From 2023 - 2025, 48 Bachelor's level CWWs were hired and assigned to various program units

- Of these, 38 are still employed with DCFS

Clarification: CDSS Guidelines allow up to 50% of staffing in Emergency Response (ERU) (inclusive of Dependency Investigations (DI)) to be hired at the Bachelor's level

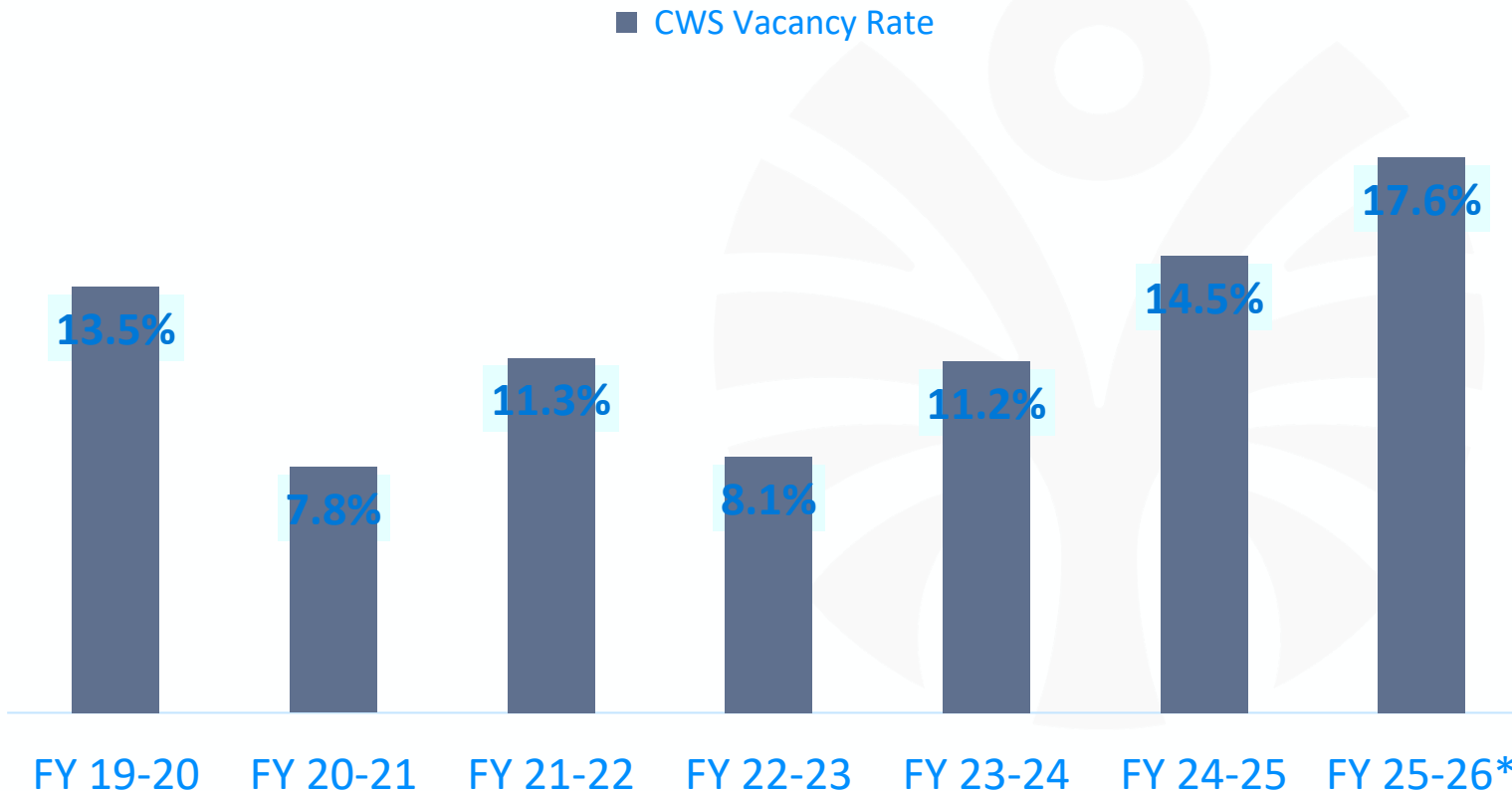
- Currently, 13 ERU/DI staff are Bachelor's level CWWs (25%)

The remaining 25 Bachelor's level CWWs are assigned to other programs as follows:

- Intake/Screening: 1
- Family Maintenance (FM): 6
- Family Reunification (FR): 9
- Permanency Youth Connections/Independent Living Program (PYC/ILP): 9

Child Welfare Supervisor Staffing*

Child Welfare Supervisor (CWS) Vacancy Rate

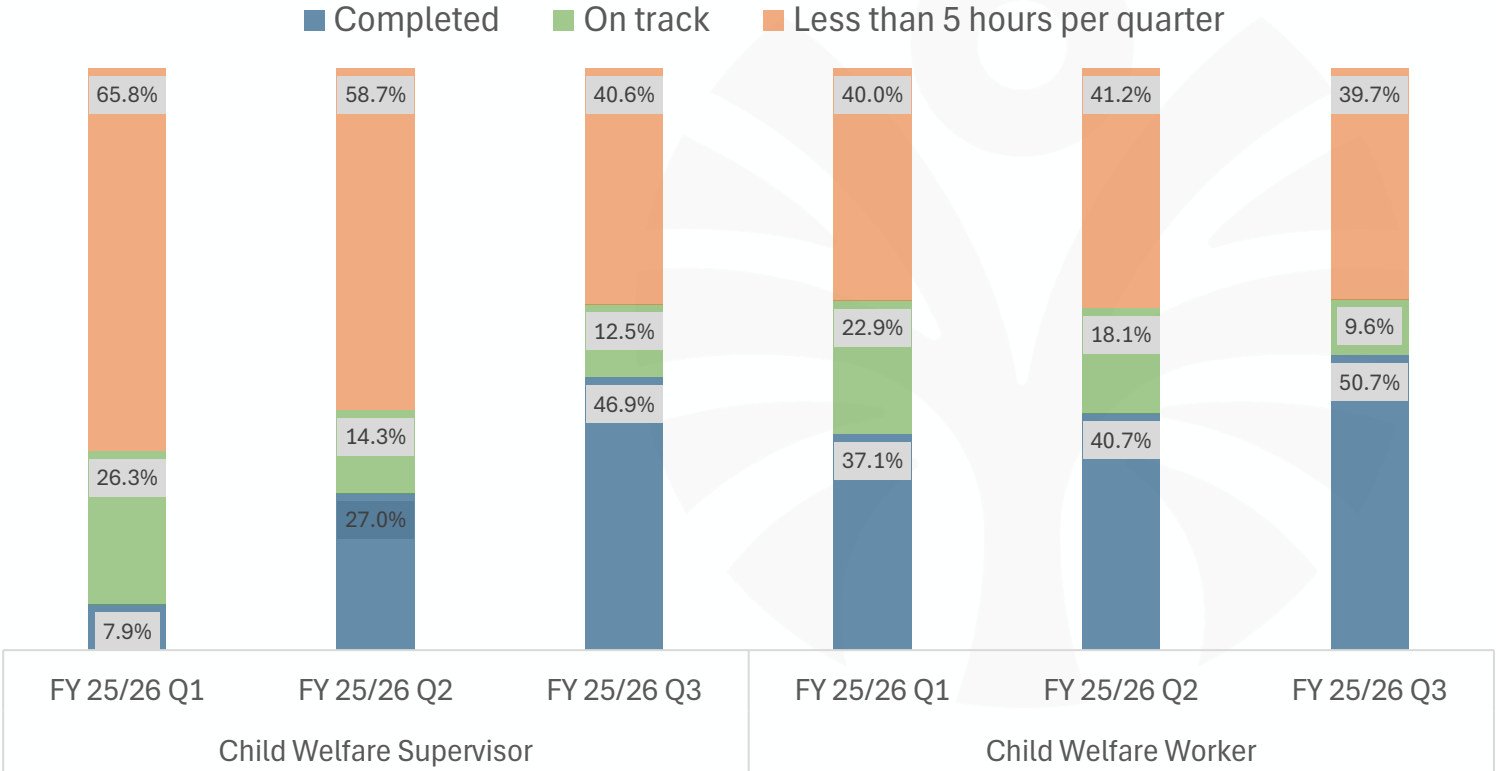


Child Welfare Supervisor Vacancy Rate (May 2026): **16.9%**

- Current Child Welfare Supervisor list expires June 2026
- Next Child Welfare Supervisor recruitment scheduled for July 2026

Child Welfare Training Hours

Training Hour Completion as of March 31, 2026*



Training hours are reported to CDSS at the end of each fiscal year based on training hours entered in the county Learning Management System (LMS).

DCFS supervisors and managers were trained on 11/6/25 to use a detailed report of training hours completed by each staff member through the end of the quarter.

Progress towards training hours is documented on regular conference memos and in annual performance evaluations.

* Training hours may not yet reflect completed trainings that need to be submitted via an add to transcript form

Open Referral Investigations Over Time From DCFS Audit Dashboard



[Link to Audit Dashboard](#)

2025 Survey of DCFS Staff

73%

PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY

Whether team members feel accepted, respected, and free to speak up and take interpersonal risks

71%

MINDFUL ORGANIZING

How teams monitor, plan, innovate, learn, and support each other

77%

WORKPLACE CONNECTEDNESS

How connected employees feel to coworkers within the agency

34%

EMOTIONAL EXHAUSTION

Team's emotional reserve higher scores indicate more burnout

63%

STRESS RECOGNITION

How well individuals identify stress and its impact on decision making

66%

PHYSICAL SAFETY

How safe team members feel in the office/work setting

67%

INTENT TO REMAIN

Personal and professional factors that contribute to employees' intention to stay with child welfare work

TeamFirst Assessment of Safety Culture

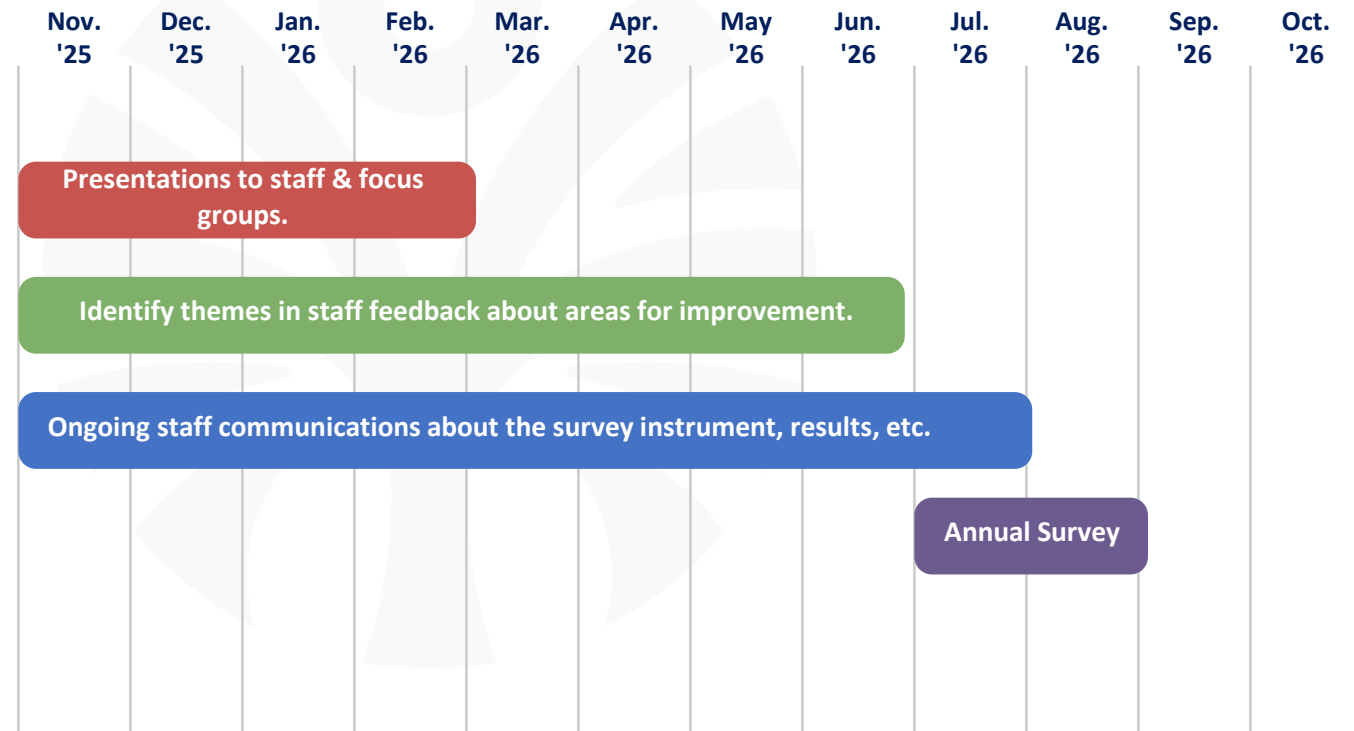
Survey Next Steps

Obtain staff feedback about inaugural survey results.

Identify opportunities for improvement.

Provide ongoing staff updates on the survey domains.

Survey administration.



Survey Insights and A Way Forward - Update



Conducted 8 presentations

Senior Managers shared department-wide and division-specific survey results and to get staff feedback



Conducted eight focus groups

Staff shared concerns regarding the Physical Safety domain with case-carrying Child Welfare Workers, non-case-carrying Child Welfare Workers, and clerical-eligibility staff by office location



Conducted four additional focus groups

Conducted four (4) additional focus groups about the Psychological Safety domain with CWWs in ERU, all other case-carrying CWWs, non-case-carrying CWWs, and clerical/eligibility staff



Planned presentation of all survey-related feedback

Presented all survey-related feedback to the CFS Senior Management Team (May 2026) to develop an action plan to address staff feedback (June 2026).



Annual administration of the TeamFirst Assessment

Annual administration of the TeamFirst Assessment of Safety Culture Survey (July 2026).

November 2025 February 2026

March 2026

Late April/May 2026

May 2026 June 2026

July 2026

Department Highlights & Opportunities

Celebrating successful client outcomes

- Caregiver Appreciation Dinner on May 15, 2026
- Independent Living Program Graduation on June 11, 2026

Collaboration

- Becoming Me (CSEC Training for community, staff) on May 27, 2026
- Border Network Human Rights Training (Immigration rights training for foster parents, community, staff) on June 15, 2026
- Safety Convening (Training on Safety Science for Community, staff, and relevant stakeholders) on June 30, 2026
- First 5 Alameda's Help Me Grow (HMG) Pilot Proposal, November 2025
- Renewal to the AB2083 MOU

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

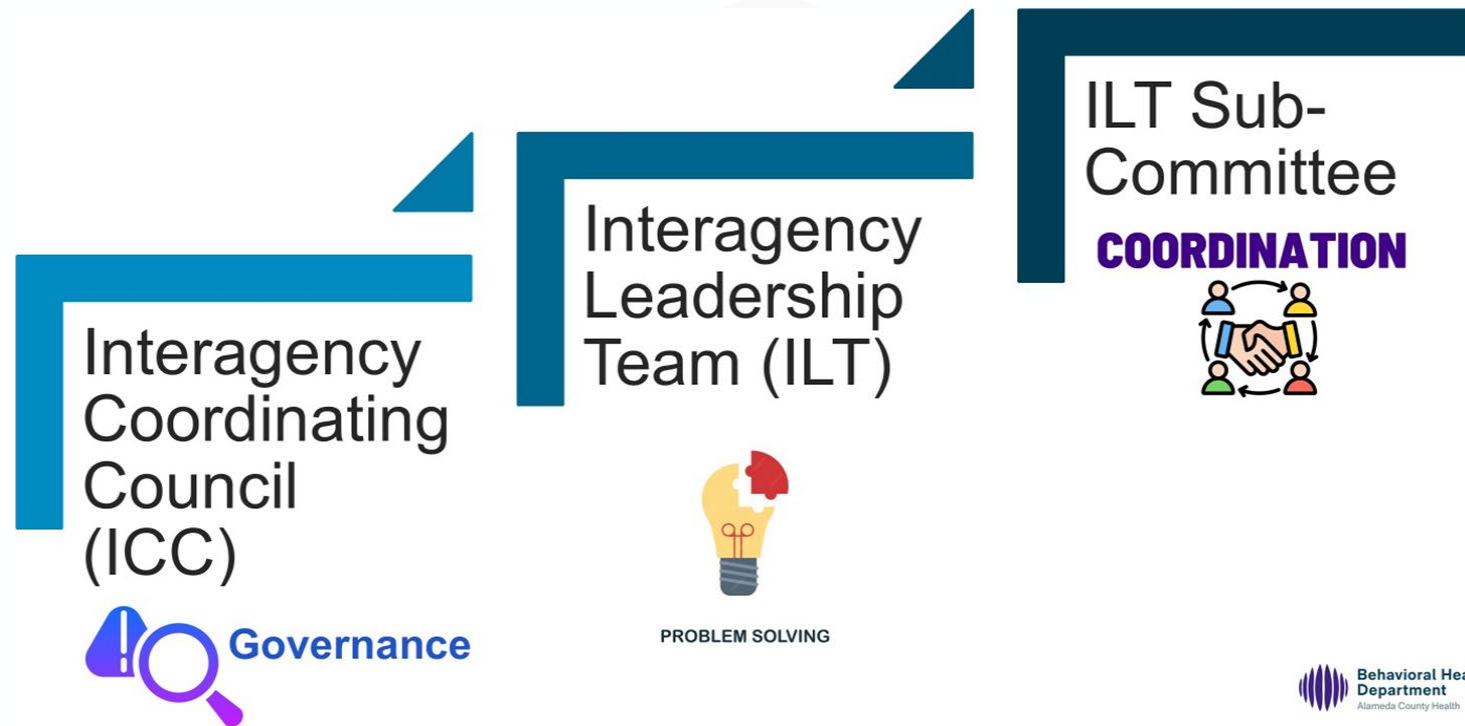
Transparency

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

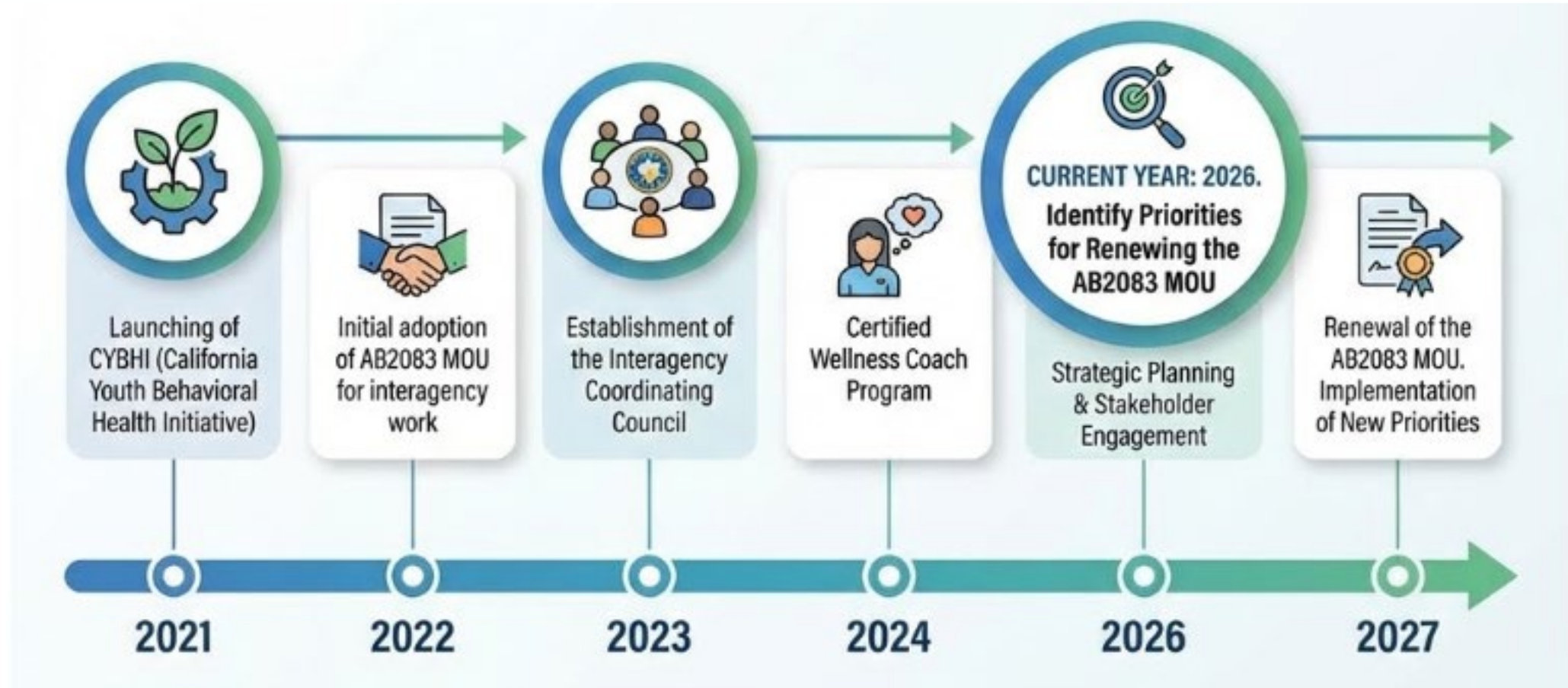
Status of Implementation of Recommendations

State Auditor Assessment Status	Rec #	Recommendation (Short)
Fully implemented 7 of 15 47%	6	Shadowing opportunities for new workers
	7	Improve documentation (court reports, contact notes, service dates)
	9	Relative identification process
	10	Update system improvement plan re: relatives/siblings; family finding
	14	Hold staff accountable for training hours / progressive discipline
	13	Training accountability system (quarterly reports, 20-hr CE)
	15	Add timeliness measures to all contracts (results-based accountability)
Pending 8 of 15 53%	1	Ensure timely supervisory review / approval of investigation reports
	2	Periodically review status of all referrals to determine # days to initiate and close referrals; identify impediments to initiating and completing referrals timely
	3	Strategies to address impediments to initiating and completing referrals timely
	4	Survey staff on retention/recruitment impediments; develop action plan
	5	Hire more bachelor's-level CWWIs into ER unit (as CDSS allows)
	8	Improve MOUs with interagency partners
	11	Policies for transitional shelter care facility
	12	Quarterly evaluation of transitional shelter care facility performance

Collaboration with Systems Serving Children



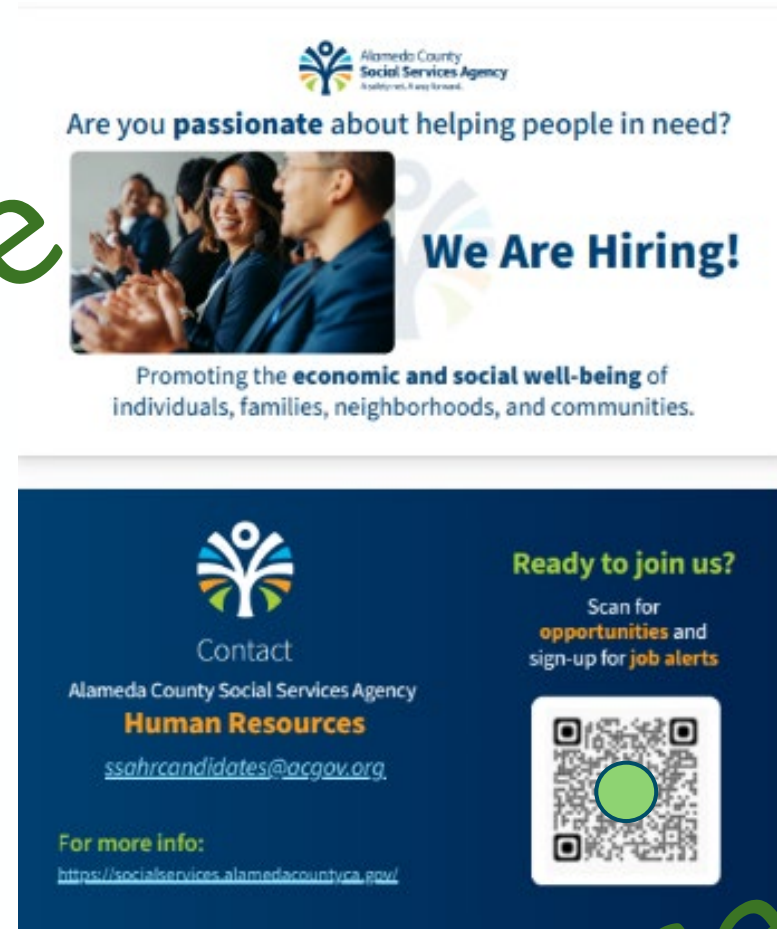
Interagency Timeline (AB2083)



The Next Iteration of AB2083 will Expand our Shared Understanding of...

- **Who We Collectively Serve**
- **What Services We Provide**
- **How We Measure Impact**

Continued Recruitment Outreach Efforts



Caregiver Appreciation Dinner



APPENDIX

Appendix

Glossary of Frequently Used Terms

Child and Family Team (CFT) – A CFT is a group of individuals that includes the child/youth/NMD, family members, professionals, natural community supports, and other individuals identified by the family who are invested in the child/youth/NMD and family’s success. The CFT typically conducts and coordinates its work through a CFT meeting. The CFT is a group of people; a CFT meeting is a functional structure and process of engaging the family and their service teams in thoughtful and effective planning.

Dependency Investigations (DI) – A program in CFS where investigation is completed once a child has been removed from their home. The CWW prepares a recommendation to the Court regarding whether the child can be determined to be a victim of abuse or neglect, and if so, whether the child should be returned home with services (FM), or remain out of home (FR).

Extended Foster Care (EFC) – Result of Assembly Bill 12 (statutes of 2010) which allowed California to take advantage of components of the federal Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-351). The EFC Program allows foster youth to remain in foster care and continue to receive foster care payment benefits (AFDC-FC payments) and services beyond age 18, as long as the foster youth is meeting participation requirements, living in an approved or licensed facility, and meeting other eligibility requirements. Participation in EFC is voluntary, and as these youth are legal adults, they may choose to exit foster care at any time after reaching age 18.

Emergency Response Unit (ERU) – this intake program for Children and Family Services receives calls from the community regarding allegations of abuse and neglect, determines a response priority, investigates the allegations or refers those calls to ARS for services.

Foster Family Agency (FFA) – An agency that provides foster homes through a network of providers they approve and supervise.

Family Maintenance (FM) – A program in CFS that provides court services to families where children remain in home but are at risk of maltreatment.

Appendix

Glossary of Frequently Used Terms

Family Reunification – A program in CFS that provides services to families during the first 6-18 months after children have been ordered Court dependents and placed in foster care.

Informal Family Maintenance (IFM) – A program in CFS that provides voluntary services to family where children remain in home.

Independent Living Program (ILP) – A federally-funded program in CFS to provide services to transition age youth and non minor dependents in foster care.

Non-Minor Dependent (NMD) – A young adult who voluntarily remains in extended foster care after turning 18.

Non-Related Extended Family Member (NREFM) – People with a strong, non-biological relationship to a child; eligible for relative approval to become caretaker for a child.

Permanent Youth Connections (PYC) – A program in CFS that provides case management to children in foster care after FR services are finished.

Resource Family Approval (RFA) – Process for relative and non-relative caregivers to be approved and prepared to care for foster children.

Short-Term Residential Treatment Program (STRTP) – Placement type intended for children and youth whose behavioral and therapeutic needs are not able to be met in a home-based family setting, even with the provision of supportive services, and who require the level of supervision and clinical interventions provided by the STRTP provider.

Appendix

Audit Recommendations

Rec #	Recommendation (Full Text)
9	Recommendation 9: To ensure that the department's child welfare workers consistently and accurately identify, locate, and notify all possible relatives of a youth within 30 days of the youth's removal from a caretaker, the department should develop policies and procedures for such practices by October 2026.
10	Recommendation 10: To ensure that foster youth fully benefit from their family network, the department should, by October 2026, include provisions for continued engagement with siblings and sibling relationship development and maintenance in its five-year System Improvement Plan for 2024 through 2029.
11	Recommendation 11: To ensure that it provides a safe space for foster children and youth in the new transitional shelter, the department should, by October 2026, develop policies and processes for tracking and minimizing overstays at its transitional shelter. The policies and processes should include a biannual review that analyzes trends and outcomes of strategies the department uses to minimize overstays, including a determination of the effectiveness and appropriateness of each strategy.
12	Recommendation 12: To ensure that it identifies and corrects any past deficiencies before it reopens the new transitional shelter, the department should, by October 2026, collaborate with its transitional shelter contractors and implement policies and processes for the quarterly evaluation of transitional center performance, such as reviewing compliance with its operating standards, facility standards, and standards of reporting critical incidents. The policies and processes should include the documentation of corrective actions. The department should also implement procedures for tracking trends in critical incidents at the new facility to ensure that it can address any deficiencies it identifies.
13	Recommendation 13: To ensure that department staff receive the required core and continuing training in a timely manner, the department should do the following by October 2026, develop and document a process to track child welfare workers' and supervisors' progress in completing all required continuing training and report regularly to department management the training completion records for all staff. This process should include creating periodic reminders for child welfare workers and supervisors to complete annual continuing training.
14	Recommendation 14: To ensure that department staff receive the required core and continuing training in a timely manner, the department should do the following by October 2026, establish processes to hold child welfare workers and supervisors accountable for completing the core training and annual continuing training. For example, the process could incorporate completion of training requirements in staff performance appraisals.
15	Recommendation 15: To ensure that it can monitor the timely provision of services, the department should, by October 2026, make sure that all contracts include the RBA measures, such as timeliness performance metrics for service provision.

Appendix

Audit Recommendations

Rec #	Recommendation (Full Text)
1	Recommendation 1: To ensure that it timely initiates and completes investigations of all immediate and non-immediate referrals, the department should, by January 2026, ensure that all supervisors review and approve investigation reports in a timely manner to ensure that they agree with the disposition.
2	Recommendation 2: To ensure that it timely initiates and completes investigations of all immediate and non-immediate referrals, the department should, by January 2026, periodically review the status of all referrals to determine the number of days to initiate and complete investigations and work with staff to identify impediments to initiating and completing investigations within the required time.
3	Recommendation 3: To ensure that it timely initiates and completes investigations of all immediate and non-immediate referrals, the department should, by January 2026, develop a strategy to address all identified impediments to ensure that it reduces the number of days for initiating and completing all investigations to comply with required time frames.
4	Recommendation 4: To ensure that it has sufficient staff to provide timely investigations of child abuse and neglect referrals and the timely provision of foster care services, the department should do the following by October 2026, survey all staff to identify impediments to retention and recruitment of staff and develop an action plan to address the identified impediments.
5	Recommendation 5: To ensure that it has sufficient staff to provide timely investigations of child abuse and neglect referrals and the timely provision of foster care services, the department should do the following by October 2026, hire more staff in the CWW I classification, up to 50 percent of the total child welfare workers in the department's ER Unit, as CDSS allows.
6	Recommendation 6: To ensure that it has sufficient staff to provide timely investigations of child abuse and neglect referrals and the timely provision of foster care services, the department should do the following by October 2026, make its shadowing process mandatory for new employees to reduce the time supervisors spend training new staff.
7	Recommendation 7: To ensure that foster youth receive all necessary services within the prescribed or agreed-upon time frames, the department should create and implement policies and processes that include the following by October 2026: (1) Documenting the service referral dates for all services. (2) Documenting all service provision, including dates when a service was provided to foster youth through an interagency partner or a contractor. (3) Reviewing and documenting, at least monthly during their visits with youth, whether youth receive services according to agreed-upon time frames and frequencies. (4) Documenting all efforts to collaborate with interagency partners to ensure timely service delivery, including efforts to obtain documentation of needed services, time frames, and delivered services.
8	Recommendation 8: To ensure that it has the necessary documentation to identify all services that partner agencies provide to youth and to ensure the timeliness of those services, the department should propose a change to the MOU to provide for information sharing. This information should include the types of services that youth are scheduled to receive, the dates the youth were referred for services, and when the services were provided to ensure timely and coordinated delivery of services.

Questions

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



Alameda County
Social Services Agency
A safety net. A way forward.

Thank you.