

NEBRASKA

Good Life. Great Mission.

DEPT. OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES



Jim Pillen, Governor

December 31, 2024

The Honorable Jim Pillen
Governor of Nebraska
P.O. Box 94848
Lincoln, NE 68509

Mr. Brandon Metzler
Clerk of the Legislature
P.O. Box 94604
Lincoln, NE 68509

Subject: Child Welfare and Juvenile Caseloads Annual Report

Dear Governor Pillen and Mr. Metzler:

Nebraska Revised Statute § 68-1207.01 requires the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to submit an annual report to the Governor and Legislature outlining child welfare and juvenile services caseloads, factors considered in their establishment, and the fiscal resources needed to maintain them.

Hereunder, you will find the information to fulfill the State Fiscal Year 2024 requirements.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Alyssa L. Bish".

Alyssa Bish, Ph.D.
Director, Division of Children and Family Services

Attachment

Division of Children and Family Services

Child Welfare and Juvenile Caseloads Annual Report

December 2024

Neb. Rev. Stat. § 68-1207.01

Introduction

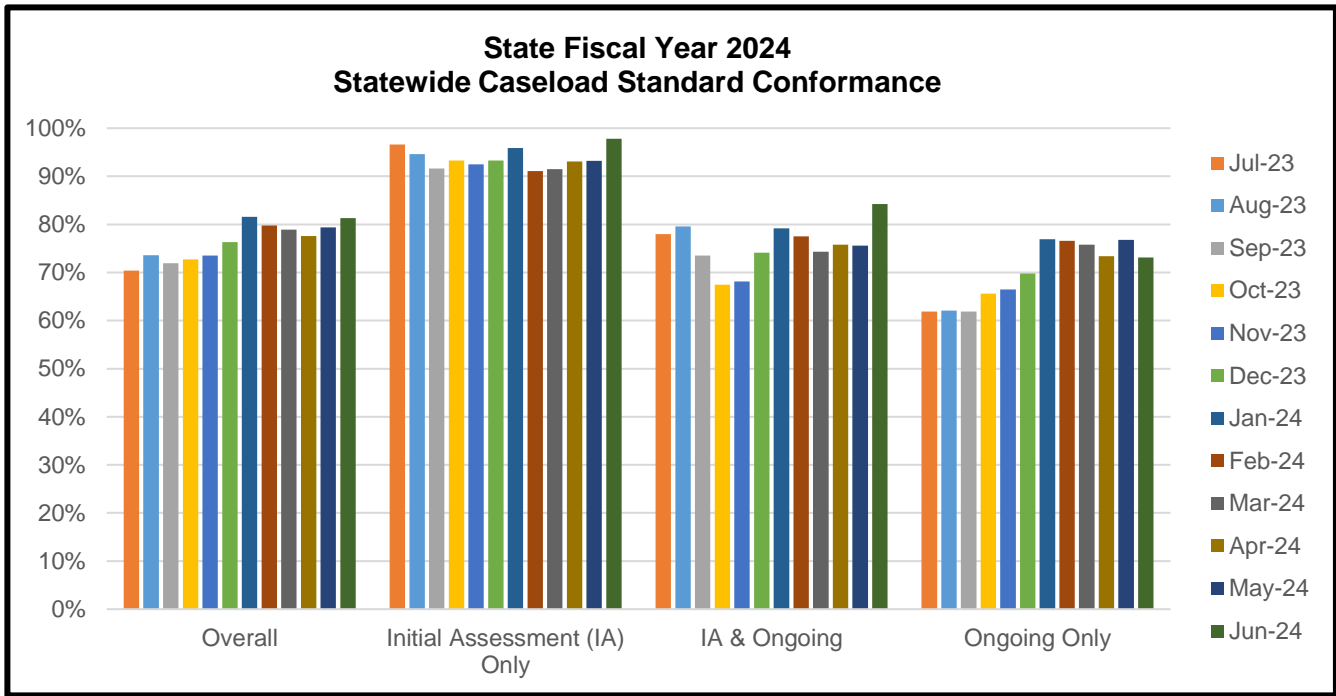
This report includes a comparison of caseloads established by the department with the workload standards recommended by national child welfare organizations, the amount of fiscal resources necessary to maintain such caseloads, the number of child welfare case managers employed by the state of Nebraska, the average caseload of child welfare case managers, and the cost of training case managers.

Comparison of Caseloads to Standards

Nebraska utilized recommendations for caseloads from the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) to determine standards for measuring caseloads in Nebraska. The caseload recommendations were released in a CWLA report from January 2012 called “Direct Service Workers’ Recommendations for Child Welfare and System Reform.” The table below illustrates the caseload standards adopted by Nebraska.

Nebraska Caseload Standards		
Type of Work	Caseload Standard	Measurement/Count
Workers making initial CPS assessments	No more than 12 active reports per month	1 Report = 1 Case
Working both making initial CPS assessments and providing ongoing support	No more than 14 active cases per month	1 Report = 1 Case 1 In-Home Family = 1 Case 1 Out-of-Home Child = 1 Case
Workers providing ongoing support for In-Home Children/Families	No more than 17 active cases per month	1 In-Home Family = 1 Case
Workers providing ongoing support for Children Placed Out-of-Home	No more than 16 active cases per month	1 In-Home Family = 1 Case
Workers providing ongoing support for Both In-Home Children/Families and Children Placed Out-of-Home	No more than 17 active cases per month	1 In-Home Family = 1 Case 1 Out-of-Home Child = 1 Case

The following chart displays how Nebraska has compared to the caseload standards adopted for each month in the State Fiscal Year. It displays the overall conformance to the standards and conformance for Initial Assessment, Ongoing, or Combined caseloads.



Fiscal Resources

The following table displays the fiscal resources the Division of Children and Family Services (CFS) needs to maintain its active staff, staff in training, and fill vacant positions. The table displays only the fiscal resources CFS needs to maintain its direct case management staff as of June 2024. This count includes all staff with the position title of CFS Specialist (CFSS) or CFSS Trainee, which includes Adult Protective Services, Bridge to Independence (B2I), Hotline, and Protection and Safety (Ongoing and Initial Assessment). This data excludes all levels of supervision and excludes staff whose positions do not include front-line case management activities.

CFS Specialists Positions June 2024					
Role	Count	Average Salary	Benefits	Total Costs Per Role	Total Costs
CFS Specialist	481	\$53,326	\$18,557	\$71,883	\$34,575,938
CFS Trainee	102	\$43,860	\$15,263	\$59,123	\$6,030,575
CFS Lead Worker	22	\$58,199	\$20,253	\$78,452	\$1,725,950
CFS Specialist Vacancies	38	\$51,068	\$17,722	\$68,840	\$2,615,907
CFS Lead Worker Vacancies	0	\$54,897	\$19,104	\$74,001	\$0
Totals	643				\$44,948,370

Case Managers Employed

The following table displays the count of CFSS employed by CFS as of June 2024. This count includes all staff with the position title of CFSS or CFSS Trainee, which includes Protection and Safety, Adult Protective Services, B2I, and Hotline.

Filled CFS Specialists Positions June 2024								
Role	Central Service Area	Eastern Service Area	Northern Service Area	Southeast Service Area	Western Service Area	Hotline	B2I	Total
CFS Specialist	56	158	69	97	55	40	6	481
CFS Trainee	6	59	8	16	6	1	0	96
CFS Lead Worker	2	10	2	4	2	2	0	22
Totals	64	227	79	117	63	43	6	599

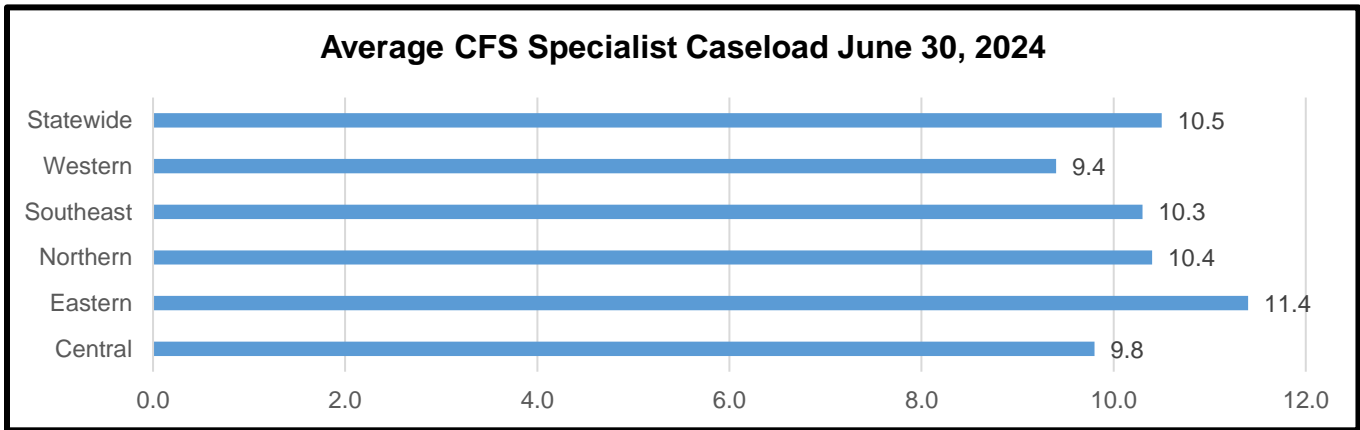
Average Length of Employment

The following table illustrates the average tenure in years for all CFSS employed by CFS as of June 2024. This count includes all staff with the position title of CFSS or CFSS Trainee, which includes Protection and Safety, Adult Protective Services, B2I, and Hotline staff.

Average Tenure (Years) CFS Specialists Positions June 2024								
Role	Central Service Area	Eastern Service Area	Northern Service Area	Southeast Service Area	Western Service Area	Hotline	B2I	Total
CFS Specialist	4.1	2.6	4.7	3.7	4.8	7.9	20.7	4.2
CFS Trainee	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.3	0.5	0.7	N/A	0.3
CFS Lead Worker	6.2	2.9	8	4.7	16.8	5.5	N/A	5.5
Totals	3.8	2	4.4	3.2	4.7	7.6	20.7	3.6

Average Caseloads

The following chart illustrates the average caseload for CFSS statewide and by service area. This measure includes all cases for out-of-home youth, in-home families, Initial Assessment families, and Alternative Response families active on June 30, 2024. The measurement for these cases is the same as used for the caseload standard conformance: 1 report = 1 case, 1 in-home family = 1 case, and 1 out-of-home child = 1 case. This chart only includes CFSS and does not include supervisors, lead workers, or trainees who may have minimal cases assigned.



Outcomes of Cases

The following chart illustrates the outcomes for youth in cases managed by CFSS statewide and by service area. This includes the counts and percentage of state wards exiting care who reunited with their families, were adopted, achieved independent living, entered, or returned to guardianships, or had another permanent resolution.

Outcomes for State Wards Exiting Care During SFY 2024												
Outcome	Central Service Area		Eastern Service Area		Northern Service Area		Southeast Service Area		Western Service Area		Statewide	
Reunification	203	51.5%	475	54.1%	281	70.4%	212	52.9%	216	61.7%	1387	57.3%
Adoption	53	13.5%	211	24.0%	50	12.5%	119	29.7%	75	21.4%	508	21.0%
Guardianship	34	8.6%	76	8.7%	36	9.0%	30	7.5%	43	12.3%	219	9.0%
Independent Living	98	24.9%	99	11.3%	21	5.3%	31	7.7%	9	2.6%	258	10.7%
Other Reason	6	1.5%	178	1.9%	11	2.8%	9	2.2%	7	2.0%	50	2.1%
Total	394		878		399		401		350		2422	

Cost of Training

The table below depicts the cost of training CFSS employed by the State of Nebraska. Training is provided through a contracted partnership between CFS and the Center on Children, Families, and the Law at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Training Costs for CFS Specialists SFY 2024	
Service Area/Contractor	Amount
Central Service Area CFSS Trainees	\$1,198,301.82
Eastern Service Area CFSS Trainees	\$5,694,956.91
Northern Service Area CFSS Trainees	\$1,955,983.85
Southeast Service Area CFSS Trainees	\$2,011,210.02
Western Service Area CFSS Trainees	\$1,346,053.37
Center on Children, Families, and the Law Costs	\$3,983,992.70
Total Costs	\$16,190,498.67