



DCYF Social Service Specialists Report to the Legislature SFY 2025 (July 2024 – June 2025)



Washington State Department of
CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

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CONTENTS

CONTENTS..... 2

Executive Summary 3

Introduction..... 3

Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Counts 3

Expenditures..... 4

Vacancy Rates..... 7

Staff Exiting Employment 8

Average Length of Employment..... 10

Progress Towards Meeting Targeted Caseload Ratio/Standard 11

Appendix..... 13

 Social Service Specialists (SSS) Job Classification Definitions per Office of Financial Management (OFM)
 State HR 13

 Social Services Support and Administrative Staff job classification definitions:..... 13

Original Date: December 2025

Child Welfare Field Operations | Approved for distribution by Natalie Green, Assistant Secretary

Executive Summary

This report is prepared in compliance with [ESSB 5950 Sec. \(227\) \(5\)](#), which requires the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) to provide a tracking report for social service specialists and corresponding social services support staff to the Office of Financial Management (OFM) and the appropriate policy and fiscal committees of the Legislature. The report includes the following information identified separately for social service specialists doing case management work, supervisory work, and administrative support staff, and identified separately by job duty or program, including but not limited to, intake, child protective services (CPS) investigations, CPS Family Assessment Response (FAR) and Child and Family Welfare Services (CFWS):

- (i) Total full-time-equivalent employee authority, allotments and expenditures by region, office, classification and band, and job duty or program.
- (ii) Vacancy rates by region, office, classification, and band.
- (iii) Average length of employment with the department and, when applicable, the date of exit for staff exiting employment with the department by region, office, classification and band and job duty or program.
- (iv) The report shall detail progress toward meeting the targeted 1:18 caseload ratio standard for child and family welfare services caseload carrying staff and targeted 1:8 caseload ratio standard for child protection services caseload carrying staff.

Introduction

The data in this report covers the period from July 2023 through June 2024. Job classifications included are Social Service Specialist (SSS) 2, 3, 4 and 5; Social Service Support Specialist (SSSS), clerical class, administrative assistant class, and program consultant class. SSS3s are typically considered case-carrying. SSS4s are lead workers with limited case carrying capacity, and SSS5s are supervisors. Further descriptions of job classifications in this report are in the Appendix.

DCYF Human Resources Division, DCYF Office of Innovation, Accountability, and Alignment; and DCYF Financial and Business Services Division provided data for this report using workforce analytics methodology, caseload methodology; and FTE allotment versus expenditures for state fiscal year 2024.

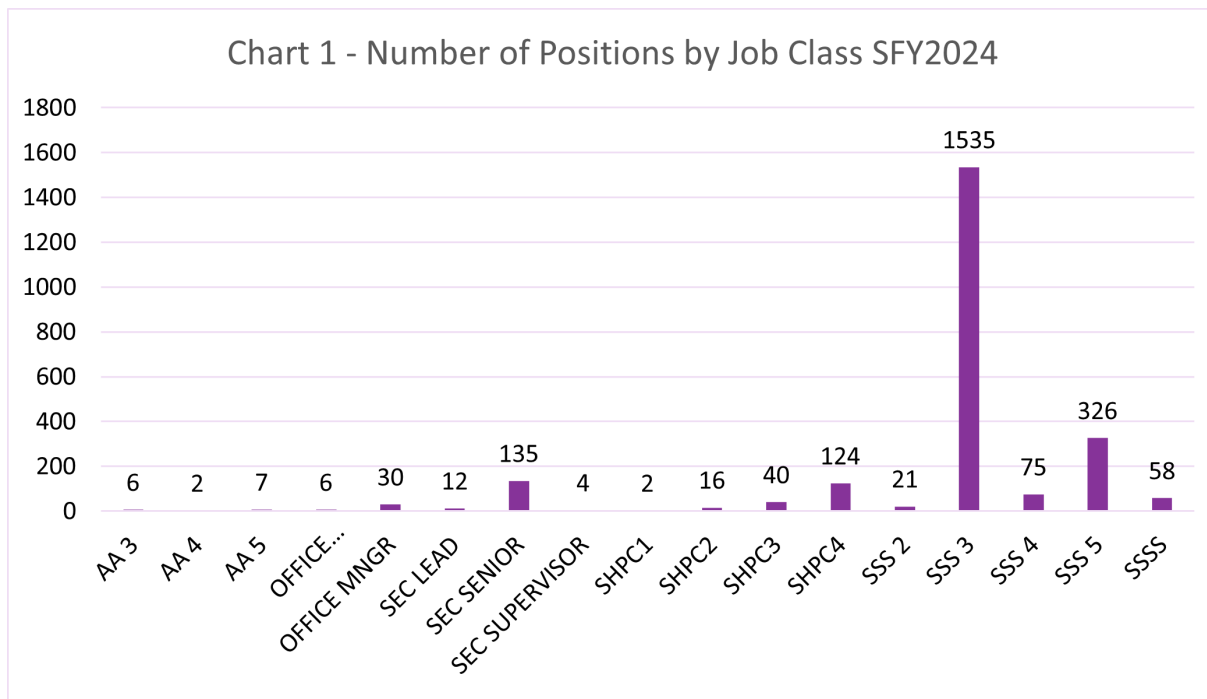
Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Counts

The total number of full-time staff within Child Welfare Division in SFY 2024 was 2,399. Of this total, 65% were Social Service Specialists 2 and 3; lead workers (SSS4) comprised 3%, and supervisors (SSS5) comprised 14%.

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Program managers that provide direct practice and policy support to field staff comprised 8%; clerical and administrative staff that provide direct support to field and program offices comprised 8%; and Social Service Support Specialists that provide direct field-based supports to units, offices and afterhours comprised 2%. Forty-five offices in six geographic regions are managed by regional management teams that include regional administrators, deputy regional administrators, and area administrators. Chart 1 provides a numerical breakdown of SSS, program, and support staff by classification, job duty, and program. The job class with the highest number of 1,535 is SSS3. The job classes with the lowest numbers are the AA4's, and SHPC 1's that only have two positions hired in the job class.



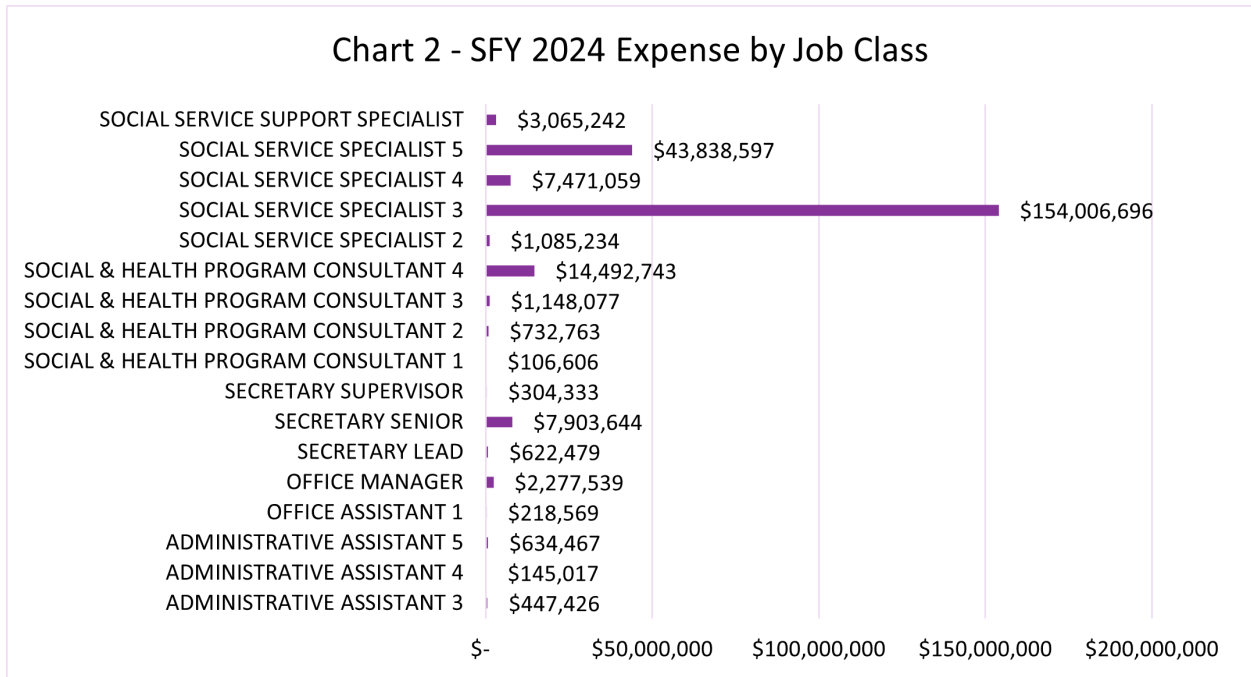
Expenditures

The expenditure data are from Washington Workforce Analytics for expenditures from State Fiscal Year 2024 (period of July 1, 2023, thru June 30, 2024). The charts below display allotments and expenditures by region, office, classification, and job duty or program for SFY 2024. Other budgetary expenses such as office supplies or equipment are not included. Charts 2, 3 and 4 show the expenditures by job class, program area, and regions.

Original Date: December 2025

Child Welfare Field Operations | Approved for distribution by Natalie Green, Assistant Secretary

DCYF SOCIAL SERVICE SPECIALISTS REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE SFY 2025 (JULY 2024 – JUNE 2025)

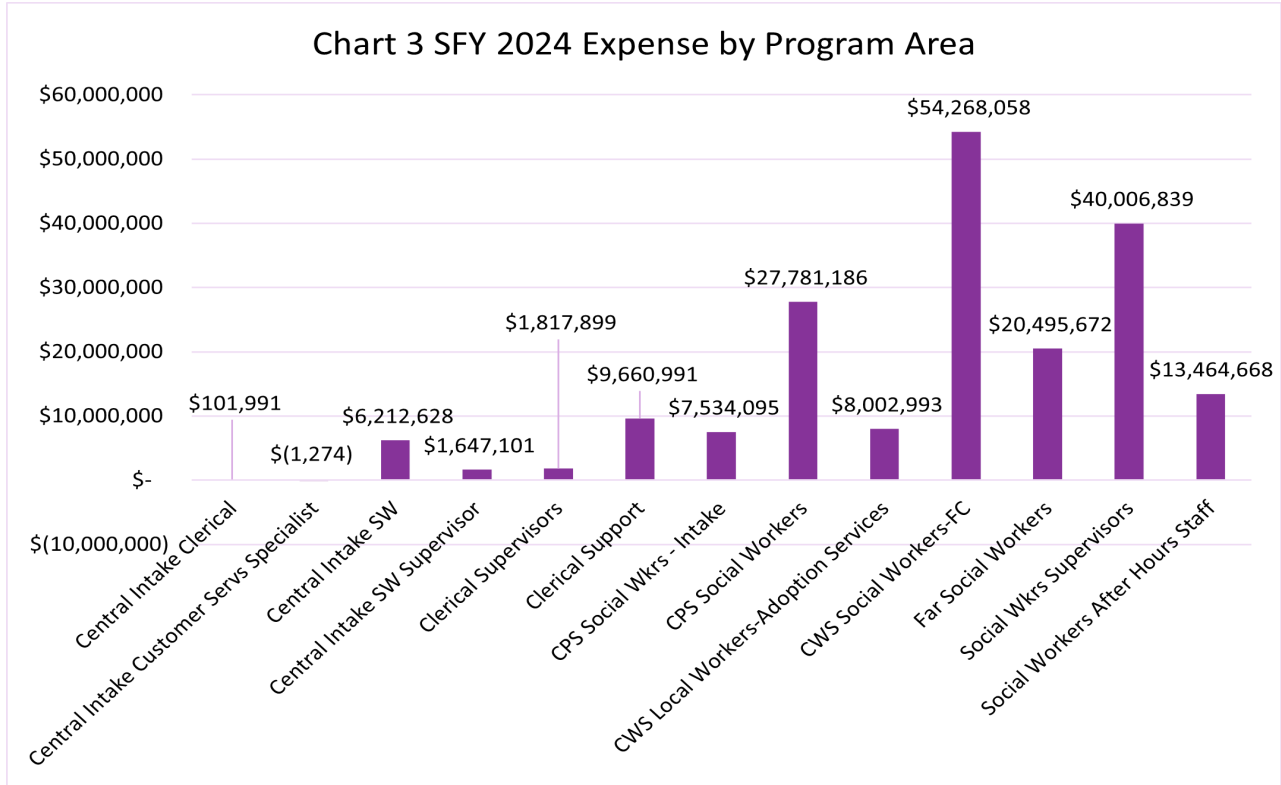


Source: DCYF Financial and Business Services

Original Date: December 2025

Child Welfare Field Operations | Approved for distribution by Natalie Green, Assistant Secretary

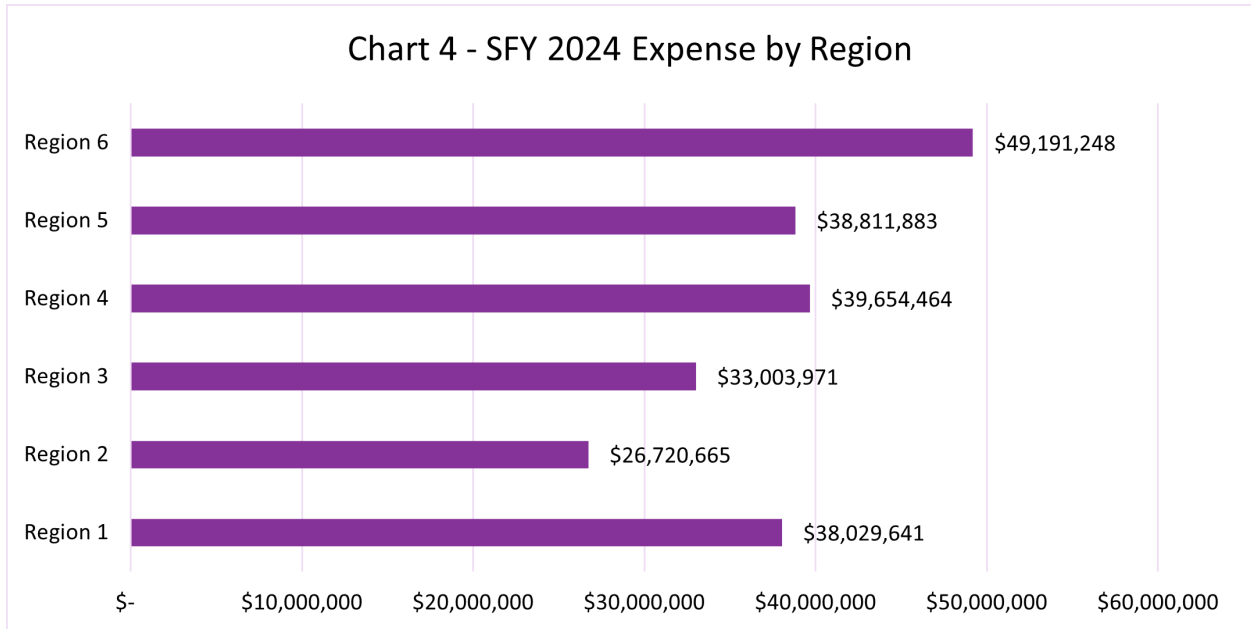
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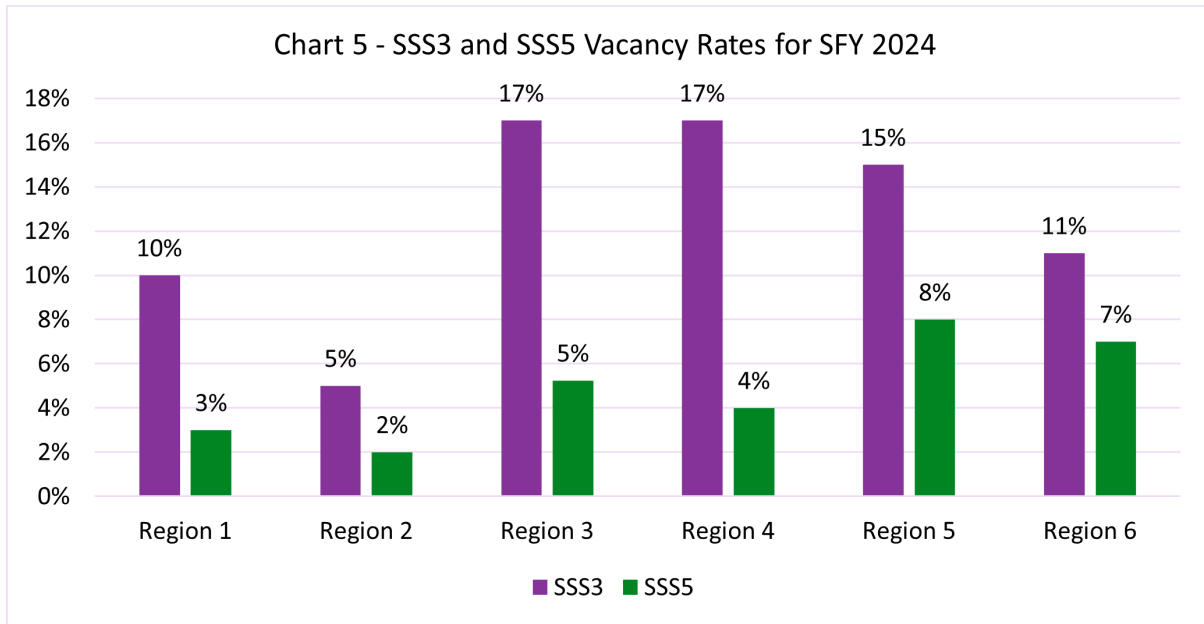
Vacancy Rates

The data source for determining vacancies and vacancy rates is the DCYF Human Resources HRMS reporting system. For the purposes of this report, vacancy is defined as the total number of established positions in a classification that were never filled during the reporting period (July 2023-June 2024). Vacancy rate is determined by the number of vacant positions divided by the total number of established positions in a classification.

Chart 5 shows vacancy rates for the SSS3 and SSS5 classifications by region.

Original Date: December 2025

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Source: DCYF Human Resources Management System (HRMS)

Staff Exiting Employment

The data source for staff exiting employment is DCYF Human Resource HRMS reporting system. Charts 6 and 7 show staff exit patterns in the fiscal year.

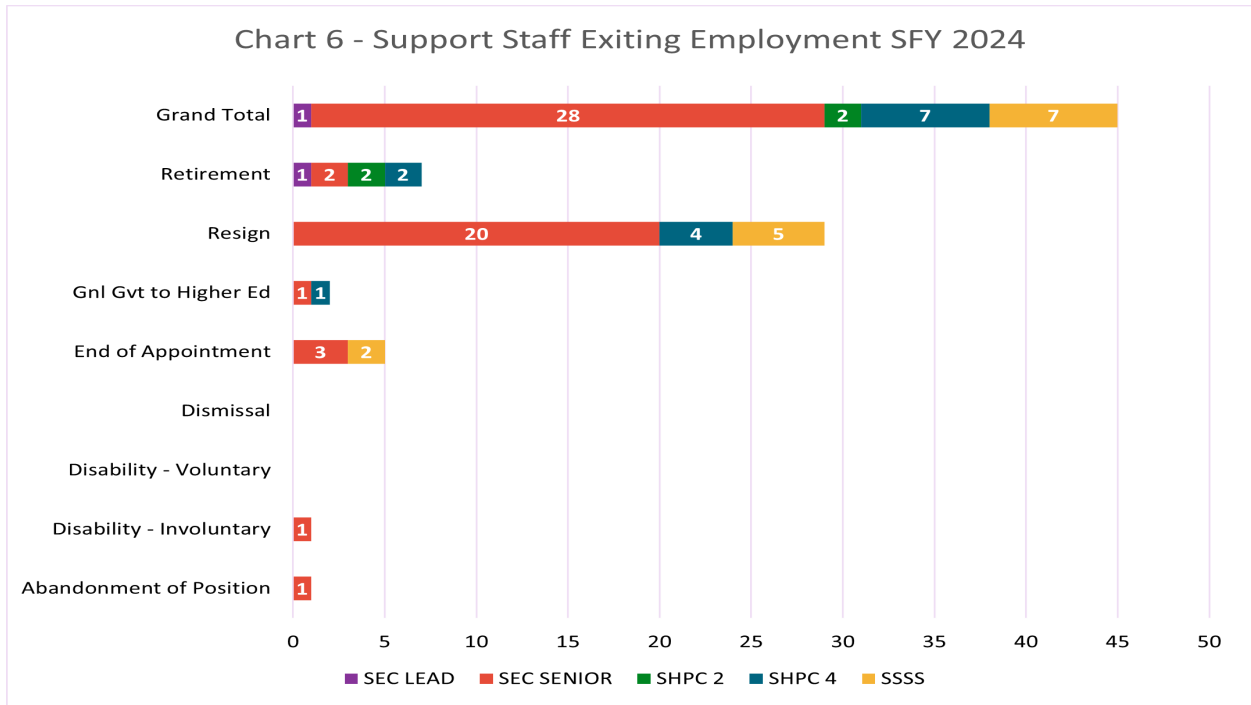
Resignation continues to be the dominant reason code for staff exits, with 210 staff indicating resignation as their reason for leaving. Of the resignations, 86.2% were SSS staff, and 13.8% were support staff. Within the SSS class, SSS3 staff accounted for 61.3% of all SSS resignations.

During the same period, there were a total of 29 resignations among the support class, with Secretary Senior staff accounting for 69% of resignations among all support staff during the fiscal year.

Original Date: December 2025

Child Welfare Field Operations | Approved for distribution by Natalie Green, Assistant Secretary

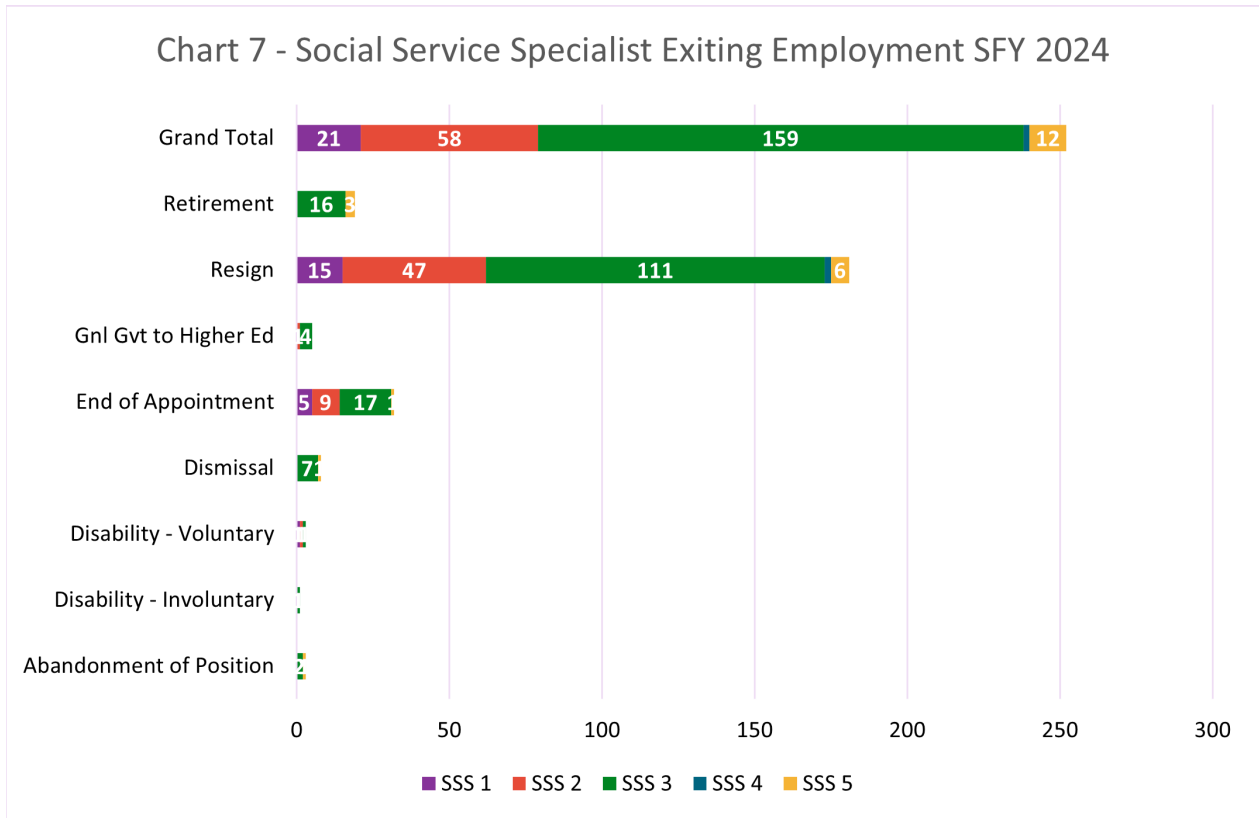
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Source: DCYF Human Resources Management System (HRMS)

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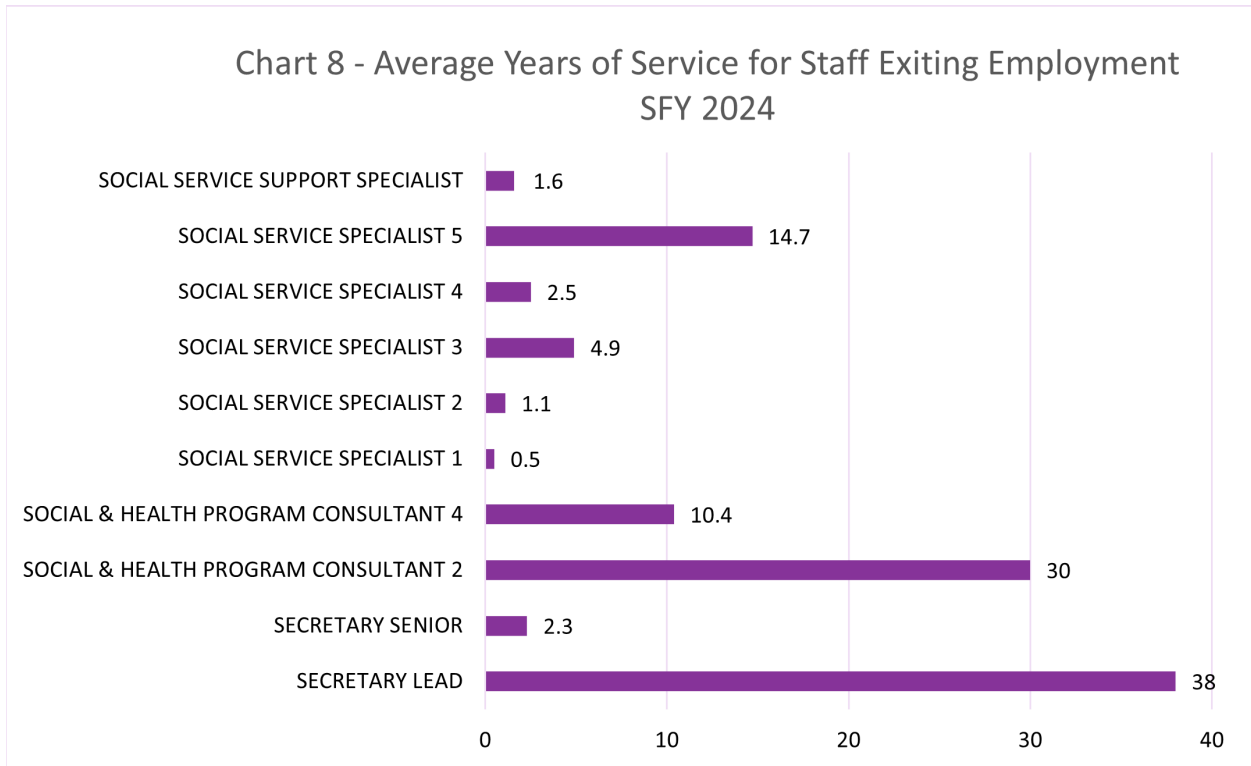
Average Length of Employment

DCYF HR data shows the average length of employment for all classifications during the fiscal year was 10.6 years and ranged from 0.5 years to 38 years. Fiscal year averages for the SSS and program support classifications are represented in Chart 8. SSS5 had an average of 14.7 years; SSS3 class had an average of 4.9 years; SSS4 had an average of 2.5 years; SSS2 had an average of 1.1 years, and SSS1 had an average of 0.5 years. The SSS1 and SSS2 classes had the shortest lengths of employment because both are transition classes, and workers usually spend about a year in each class before advancing to the next level.

The average years of service for Secretary Lead (38 years) was the longest among the clerical and administrative assistant class. Secretary Seniors had a lower average of 2.3 years presumably because of the high exits among this class. This class of workers provide day-to-day clerical, customer service, and a variety of business/office supports to work units and programs in field offices throughout the state. The average years of service for SHPC2 (30 years) was the longest among the program consultant job class.

Original Date: December 2025

Child Welfare Field Operations | Approved for distribution by Natalie Green, Assistant Secretary



Source: DCYF Human Resources Management System (HRMS)

Progress Towards Meeting Targeted Caseload Ratio/Standard

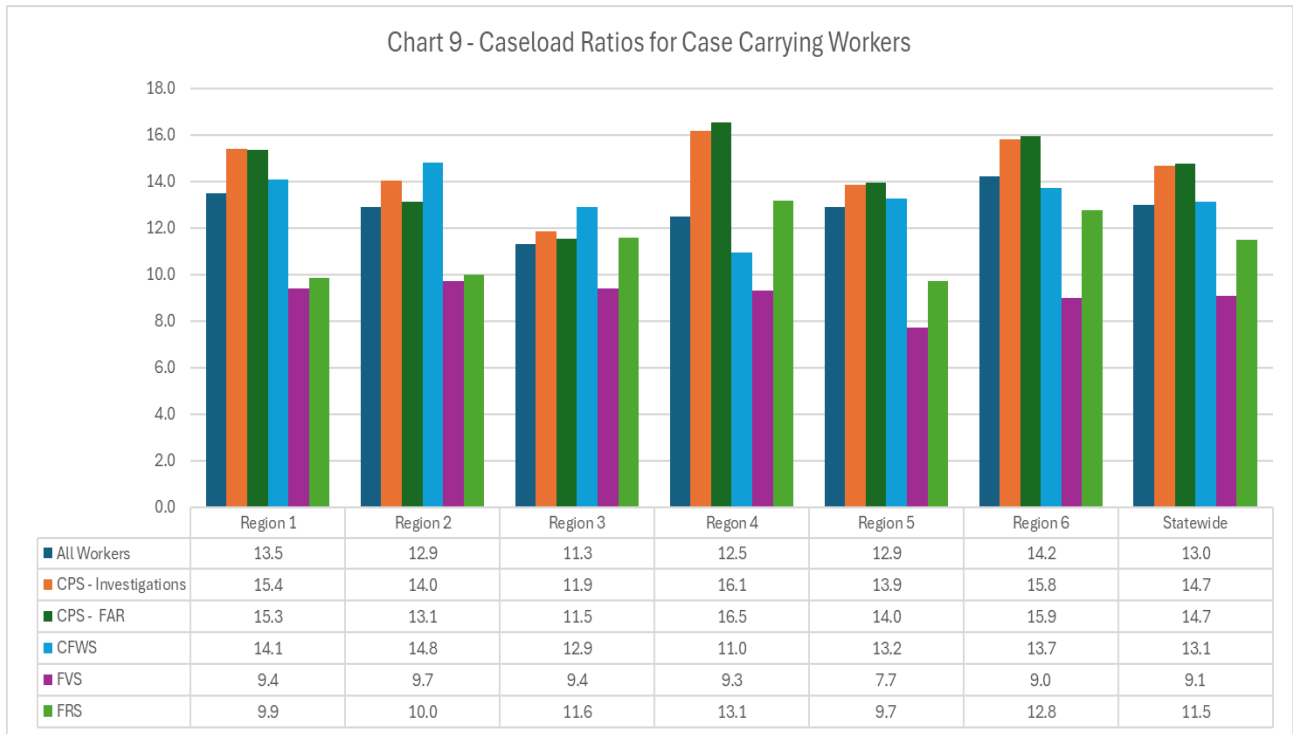
The caseload data source for this report is DCYF Office of Innovation, Accountability and Alignment (OIAA). The term “child welfare” is inclusive of program areas – CPS-Investigations, CPS-Family Assessment Response (CPS-FAR), Family Voluntary Services (FVS), Child and Family Welfare Services (CFWS), and Family Reconciliation Services (FRS).

Chart 9 identifies the caseload ratios for each program per region, looking at an average of weighted counts at the beginning of each month throughout SFY 2025. The report captures all Social Service Specialist II and III workers (labeled as Social Workers in FamLink) with at least one assignment type that has the assignment characteristics of Primary, Secondary, or Child Assignment (for CFWS only).

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Appendix

Social Service Specialists (SSS) Job Classification Definitions per Office of Financial Management (OFM) State HR

SSS1 – This is the entry-level, in-training classification for the professional social services series. Performs intakes, assessments, and/or investigations of abandonment, abuse, neglect, financial exploitation, personal exploitation or self-neglect of vulnerable adults or abuse and neglect of children. Clients served are children and/or families in which risk of child abuse or neglect is minimal, or adults with disabilities resulting from varying degrees of incapacity, or vocational, social, cultural or health impairments that hinder economic or residential independence.

SSS2 – This is the journey level of the series. Positions provide professional-level social services to children and/or families in which risk of child abuse or neglect are minimal or investigations of abandonment, abuse, neglect, financial/personal exploitation, and self-neglect for vulnerable adults resulting from varying degrees of incapacity, or vocational, social, cultural or health impairments that hinder economic or residential independence.

SSS3 – Performs advanced level, specialized case management in complex cases involving children. Functions as a lead worker or sole case manager in a remote location. Positions that serve as lead workers or sole case managers in a remote location are responsible for the full scope of social services provided in that location.

SSS4 – Positions at this level serve as a lead worker, coach, and assists with limited supervisory tasks in some instances. Manages a limited caseload and performs advanced-level specialized case management, conducting investigations of abandonment, abuse, neglect, financial exploitation, personal exploitation or self-neglect of vulnerable adults and children. (Established July 1, 2019)

SSS5 – Functions as the first-line supervisor of a unit of Social Service Specialists (implemented July 1, 2019). Provides supervision, guidance, and direction for caseloads in specialized or mixed units and programs.

Social Services Support and Administrative Staff job classification definitions:

Social Service Support Specialist (SSSS) – Assists Social Service Specialists in providing services to children and/or families, such as: assisting with health and safety home visits, transporting children to scheduled parent-child visits, sibling visits, and/or supervising children awaiting placements.

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Social and Health Program Consultant (SHPC) 1 – Assist a higher-level Program Manager by developing a portion of and/or monitoring, evaluating, or coordinating social, financial or health services programs, projects or the program policies and procedures. May develop and/or conduct training in program policies and procedures to staff or service vendors.

SHPC 2 – Independently develop, administer and/or monitor social, financial or health services programs; or the program policies and procedures for use by staff or service vendors; or develop plans for monitoring service delivery; or develop, implement, monitor, and provide statewide program consultation and/or technical assistance to staff, community or providers to enhance the delivery of services; or serves as a licenser of daycare centers.

SHPC 3 – Within the social service system, this position serves as a designated lead worker, directing and monitoring the activities of a team comprised of professional level social service staff, other professional staff, families and the community in providing guidance to families that are at risk of dependency and/or serving clients with severe and intense social service needs. These positions also develop, administer and/or monitor social, financial or health services programs; or the program policies and procedures used by staff or vendors.

SHPC 4 - (1) Serves as a designated specialist for client eligibility for social services, the training of staff who conduct client eligibility assessments and the monitoring of staff and staff processes in meeting state and federal policies and regulations. Conducts quality assurance audits and reviews responses to quality assurance audits, as necessitated by legal, statutory or legislative requirements. Reviews and approves corrective action plans.

OR

(2) Oversees the intake and coordination of client cases to include acting as the liaison with internal DCYF entities and external entities such as law enforcement, courts, attorneys, and community-based social service organizations; and monitors these cases through the abuse, neglect, or financial exploitation hearings process to ensure the health, safety, and well-being of vulnerable children and adults.

Secretary – In support of a supervisor and/or staff members, provides secretarial services and assistance for the purpose of facilitating the supervisor's and/or staff members' own work and relieving the supervisor and/or staff members of day-to-day clerical detail. Applies knowledge of supervisor's and/or staff members' work commitments including status of projects and nature of contacts. Secretarial duties include making travel arrangements, scheduling meetings, taking notes, and transcribing minutes, screening calls and visitors, keeping supervisors and/or staff member's calendar(s) and committing supervisor's and/or staff members' time.

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Secretary Lead – As the designated lead worker, assigns, instructs and checks the work of lower-level staff and performs the duties of Secretary Senior including complex secretarial duties such as independently planning, organizing and prioritizing work, monitoring and evaluating budget(s) status and initiating corrections, developing travel itineraries, compiling reports, studies, applications and developing, modifying and/or maintaining database management, office record-keeping, or filing system(s).

Positions establish office procedures, standards, priorities and deadlines, coordinate office operations, initiate action to ensure work unit and/or office goals are met and have frequent contacts with clients, the public, staff members from other departments, students, and faculty.

Secretary Senior – Performs complex secretarial duties such as independently planning, organizing, and prioritizing work, monitoring and evaluating budget(s) status and initiating corrections, developing travel itineraries, compiling reports, studies or applications, developing, modifying and/or maintaining database management, office record-keeping; or filing system(s), establishing office procedures, standards, priorities, and deadlines, and coordinating office operations. Positions initiate action to ensure work unit and office goals are met and have frequent contacts with clients, the public, staff members from other departments, students, and faculty.

Secretary Supervisor – Supervise office support staff, interview and recommends the selection of applicants, conduct training, assign, and schedule work, act on leave requests, conduct annual performance evaluations and recommend corrective or disciplinary actions. Positions establish office procedures, standards, priorities and deadlines and have frequent contact with clients, the public, students, faculty, staff members from other departments and management staff. Positions perform complex secretarial duties such as independently planning, organizing and prioritizing work to meet internal and external deadlines, monitoring and evaluating budget(s) status and initiating corrections, developing travel itineraries, compiling reports, studies and applications, developing, modifying and/or maintaining database management, office record-keeping, or filing system(s), coordinating office operations and initiating action to ensure work unit and office goals are met. Positions may perform administrative duties as delegated by the supervisor and/or provide and coordinate administrative support functions for a large unit. Exercise independent judgment to accomplish assignments or solve problems and to develop new work methods, procedures, strategies or modify existing work methods, procedures; and strategies to solve new or unusual problems. Work is subject to review at the completion stage to determine effectiveness in producing expected results.

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