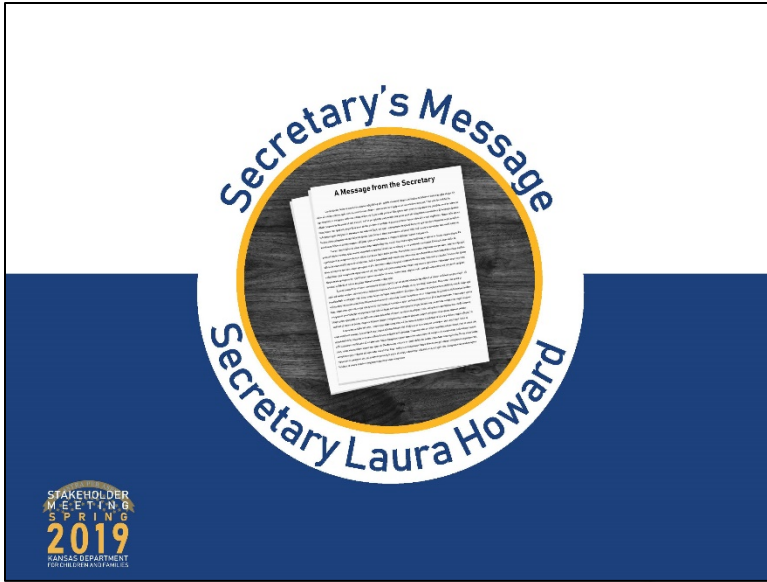


Secretary's Message



Purpose of Today's Meeting

- Agency Update – Accomplishments and Key Priorities
- Review Legislative Session
- Update on Child Welfare Task Force Recommendations
- Hear From You about your Priorities

STAKEHOLDER MEETING SPRING 2019 KANSAS DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES Secretary's Message

Secretary's Reflections

- Time of rebuilding
 - Infrastructure
 - Resources
 - Relationships



Secretary's Message

Accomplishments

- Building a strong internal team
- Changing how we do our business
- Re-establishing key collaborations
- State agencies working together
- Re-energizing community engagement
- Identifying key priorities and metrics



Secretary's Message

Key Priorities

Economic and Employment Services

- Expand Food Assistance Outreach
- Increase outreach for and participation in food assistance employment and training programs
- Transition foster families' daycare payments to the child care subsidy program
- Prioritize hiring of eligibility workers who process benefits applications
- Continue to look at ways to enhance the safety net



Secretary's Message

Key Priorities

Rehabilitation Services

- Begin quarterly collaborative meetings with the VR service provider network to improve coordination of services, streamline processes, and address the employment service needs of Kansans with disabilities
- Use the Request for Proposal Process to seek innovative and collaborative projects
 - Increase employment services and outcomes
 - Increase access to Pre-Employment Transition Services for students with disabilities
- Implement a career ladder for VR Counselors and Disability Examiners to improve recruitment and retention



Secretary's Message

Key Priorities

Child Support Services

- Update communication tools that stakeholders access to learn and interact with the IV-D program
- Improve the use of data
- Develop a strategic plan and how we measure success
- Evaluate effectiveness of child support privatization and look at recommendations to improve the program



Secretary's Message

Key Priorities

Prevention and Protection Services

- Child Protective Services – Timely initial assessment decisions
- Strong safety, resiliency and prevention networks
 - Team decision-making; Family First Prevention Grants
- Reduce delays to timely legal permanency
- Strengthen Placement Stability
 - Increasing Relative Placements; QRTP bed availability; placement matching system
- Strengthen Health Care Coordination for Children
 - Interagency coordination; QRTP development; Juvenile Crisis Intervention Centers
- Worker Recruitment and Retention



Secretary's Message

Key Priorities

PPS – Adult Protective Services

- Increase the # of cases substantiated for Fiduciary Abuse and Exploitation
 - Strong financial casework to law enforcement and/or AG's office
 - Educating law enforcement
 - Encouraging creation of Fiduciary Abuse Specialist Teams (FAST) within communities
- Increase guardianships for vulnerable Kansans
- Workforce Recruitment and Retention



Secretary's Message

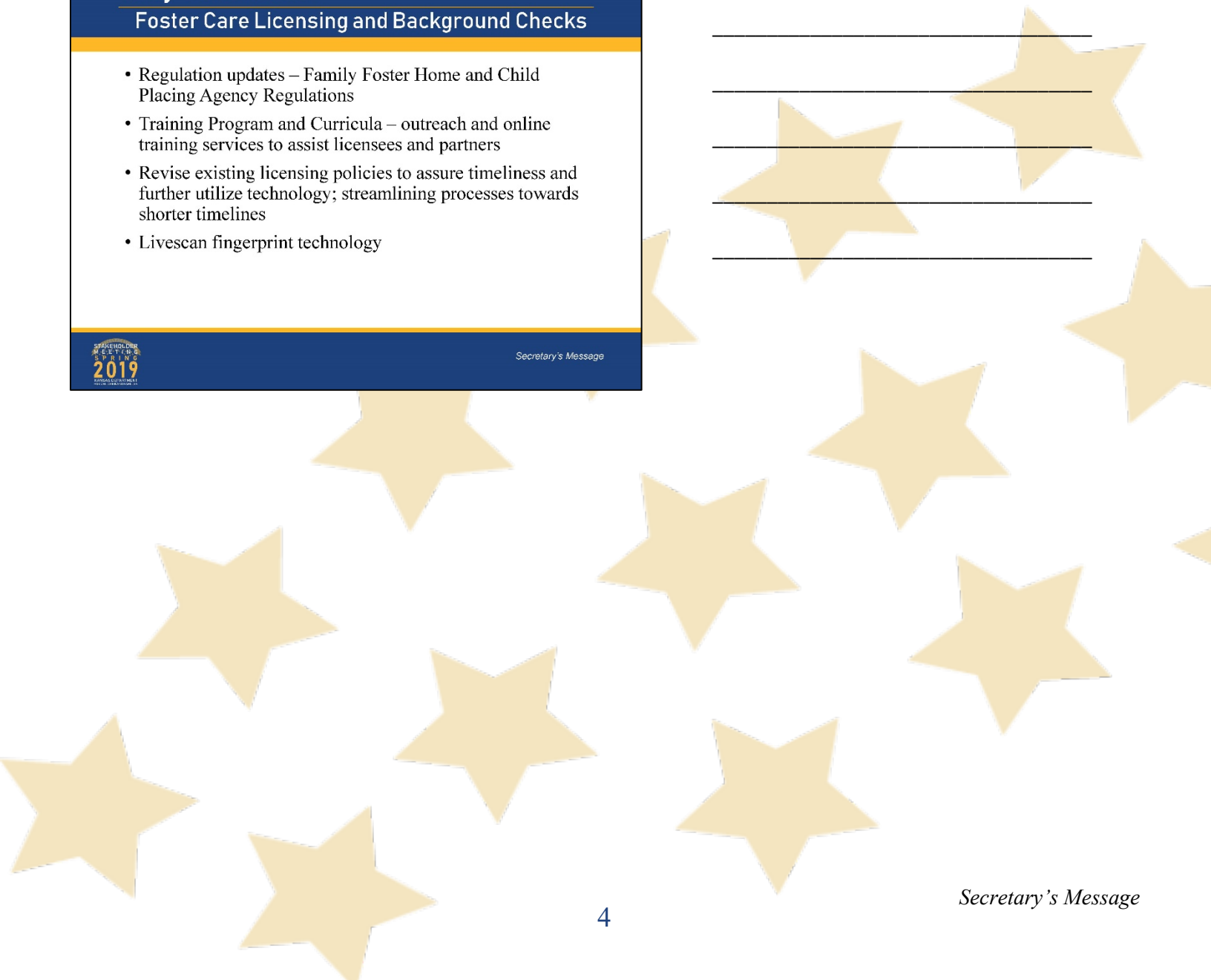
Key Priorities

Foster Care Licensing and Background Checks

- Regulation updates – Family Foster Home and Child Placing Agency Regulations
- Training Program and Curricula – outreach and online training services to assist licensees and partners
- Revise existing licensing policies to assure timeliness and further utilize technology; streamlining processes towards shorter timelines
- Livescan fingerprint technology



Secretary's Message





**FY 2019 and FY 2020 DCF Budget
Comparison of Submitted Budget to 2019
Legislative Session Approved**

Legislative Approved Budget	FY 2019 SGF	FY 2019 All Funds	FY 2020 SGF	FY 2020 All Funds
Submitted Base Budget	289,400,106	680,461,329	282,304,741	682,449,100
Increase During Session	8,306,054	9,115,426	49,414,018	66,890,102
2019 Legislative Session Approved Budget	297,706,160	689,576,755	331,718,759	749,339,202

Note: The all funds amounts include \$15.7 million in transfers to other state agencies.

Adjustments to the Approved Budget	FY 2019 SGF	FY 2019 All Funds	FY 2020 SGF	FY 2020 All Funds
<i>Consensus Caseload Adjustments</i>				
Fall 2018 Consensus Caseload Estimates				
Temporary Assistance for Families Cash Assistance	0	(300,000)	0	(900,000)
Foster Care	3,670,777	(513,223)	36,724,000	40,540,000
Spring 2019 Consensus Caseload Estimates				
Temporary Assistance for Families Cash Assistance	0	(200,000)	0	(600,000)
Foster Care	<u>2,200,000</u>	<u>5,500,000</u>	<u>(3,000,000)</u>	<u>(2,200,000)</u>
Total CCE Additions	5,870,777	4,486,777	33,724,000	36,840,000
TANF expenditures continue the trend down. The CCE estimate reflects this longtime caseload trend.				
Foster Care caseload projections for FY2020 reflect the change to the new delivery model for 9 months. The new delivery model for foster care will increase case management providers from two to four statewide. Placement rates will now be set by DCF and paid directly. There will be direct administration agreements between DCF and Child Placing Agencies and Residential Facilities. A new Placement Matching System also has been added.				
<i>Other Adjustments</i>				
Additional Child Welfare Staff	401,148	415,526	2,563,031	2,654,891
The Governor requested 26 child welfare positions be added in FY 2019 and an additional 26 child welfare positions to be added in FY 2020 to total 52 positions. This adjustment was reduced to 16 additional staff in FY 2020 resulting in 42 total positions.				
These staff are being utilized primarily for child welfare investigators, but some are for PRC and PPS program administration.				

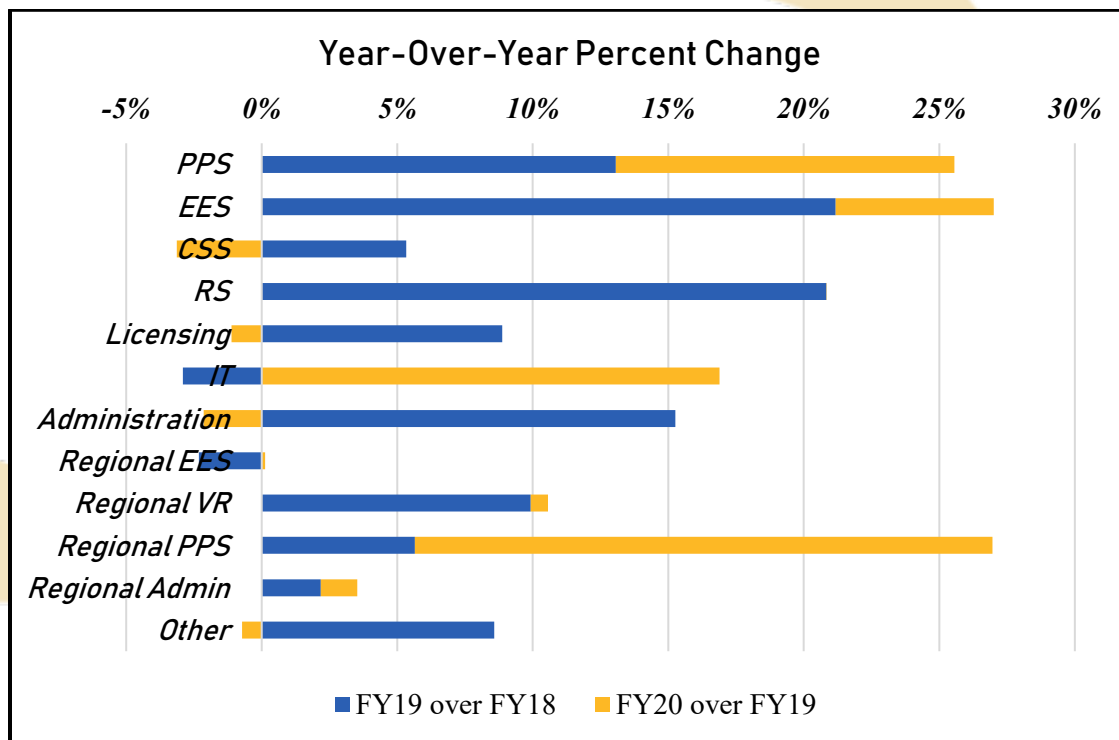
Adjustments to the Approved Budget	FY 2019 SGF	FY 2019 All Funds	FY 2020 SGF	FY 2020 All Funds
<p>Fund New Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) Prevention Grants</p> <p>The new FFPSA legislation allows Title IV-E agencies to utilize IV-E foster care funding to develop new prevention services. New prevention grants will bring trauma-informed, promising, supported, or well-supported practices to Kansas families. Grants will be awarded and begin October 1, 2019 at the latest. They will be 50% state funds and 50% federal funds</p>			6,500,000	13,000,000
<p>Fund Child Placements for FFPSA Substance Abuse Treatment Stays</p> <p>Title IV-E agencies may now claim title IV-E foster care maintenance payments for a foster care child placed with a parent in a licensed residential family-based treatment facility for substance abuse. This funds the additional costs for the child.</p>	18,000	36,000	36,500	73,000
<p>Fund FFPSA Administrative Requirements</p> <p>FFPSA requires that Title IV-E agencies conduct fingerprinting and criminal records checks using national databases and child abuse registry checks for any adult working in a child care institution. This requirement resulted in the need for 3 new staff members and additional funding for the expense of the additional background checks.</p>	434,516	501,518	391,795	452,210
<p>Family Preservation Contract Increase</p> <p>Children’s Initiative funds of \$1,086,705 were added to the Family Preservation Contracts, which will also allow approximately \$143,621 more IV-E to be drawn down (\$1,230,326 total increase), increasing the annual budget to \$12,000,000 when submitting the new budget. This funding will be used to cover increased rates and services to more Kansas families. New Family Preservation Contracts with new service tiers will start January 2020.</p>			0	1,086,705
<p>Planning Required for Development of a New Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System (CCWIS)</p> <p>To obtain federal participation in the development of an information system, a planning phase must be completed. This planning phase is projected to cost \$1.5 million in FY 2020. The FY 2019 Legislature added \$300,000 AF to the FY 2020 budget. This is in addition to the \$750,000 AF added by the 2018 Legislature that will be reappropriated to FY 2020. The remaining \$450,000 needed to get to \$1.5 million will be reappropriated from other agency savings in the FY 2019 DCF Budget to FY 2020 so the planning can be started.</p>			150,000	300,000

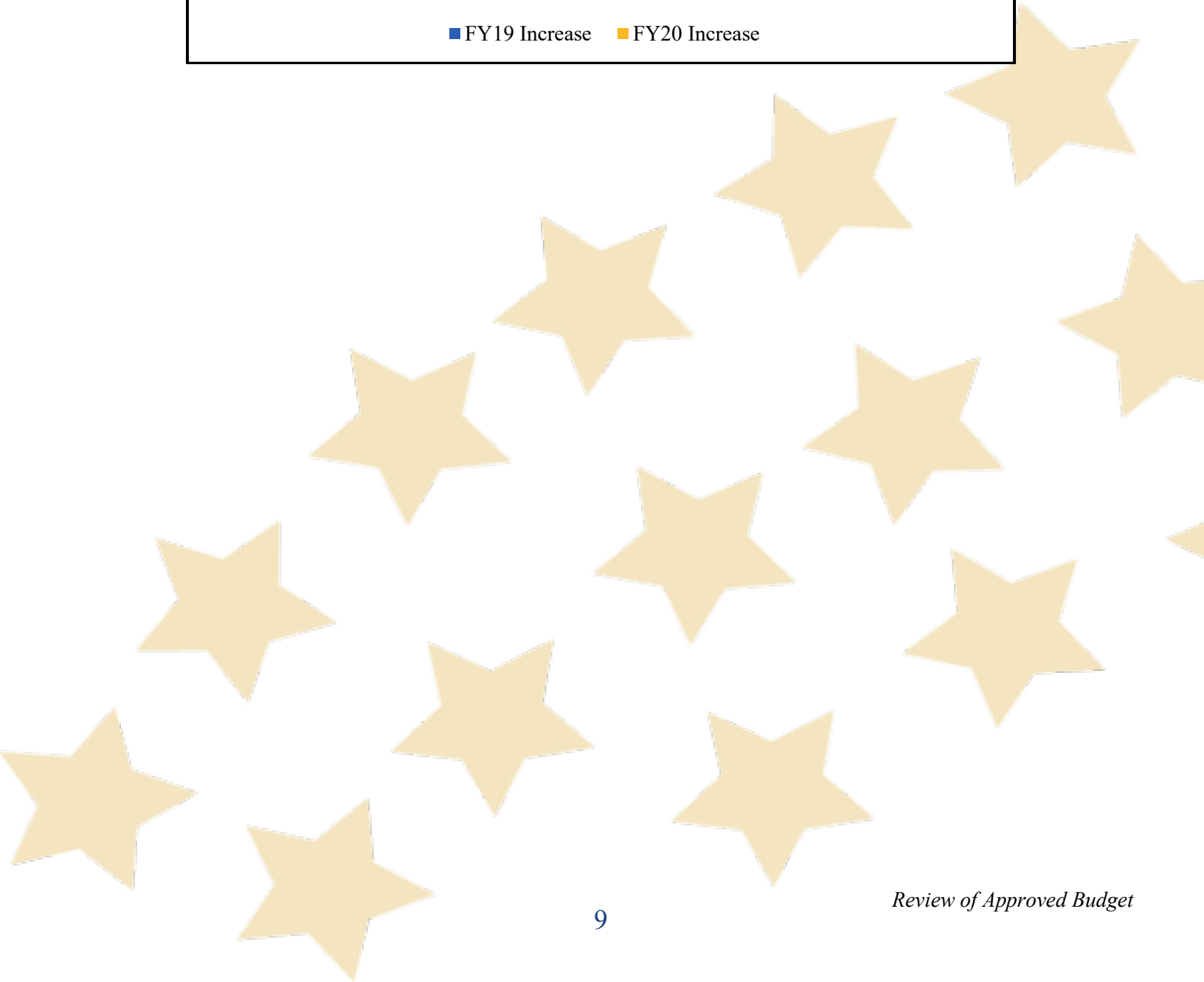
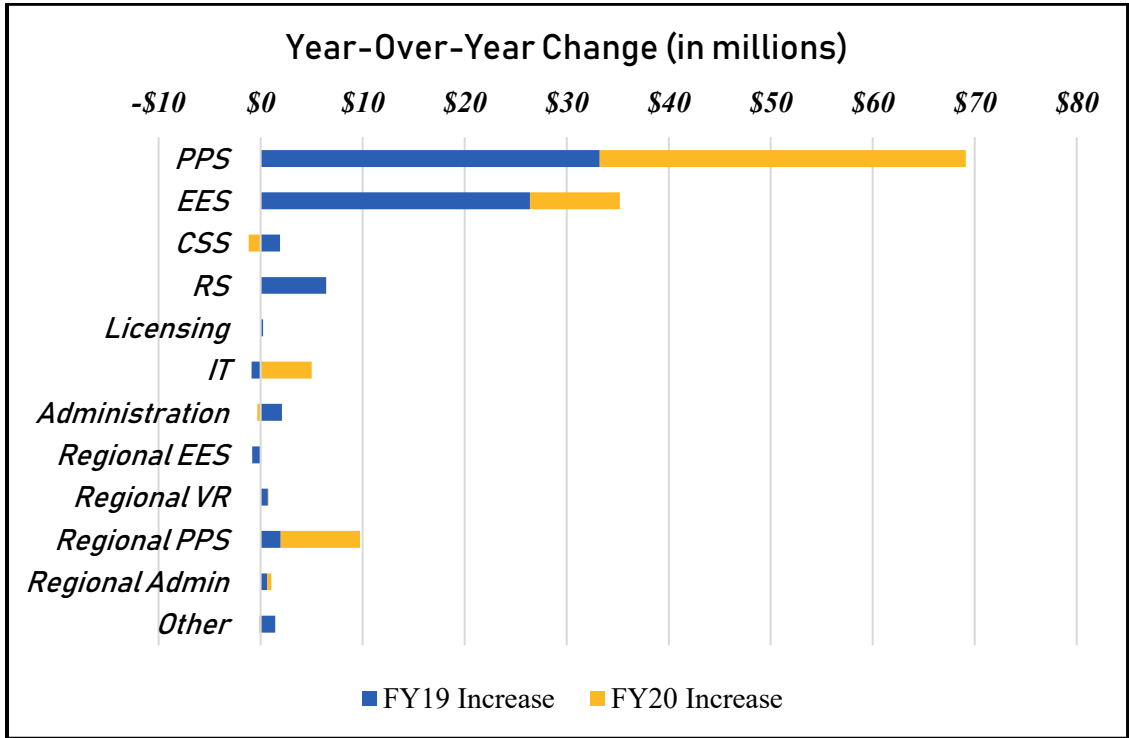
Adjustments to the Approved Budget	FY 2019 SGF	FY 2019 All Funds	FY 2020 SGF	FY 2020 All Funds
<p>Fund Upgrades to the Kansas Eligibility and Enforcement System (KEES) The KEES software upgrade, cloud transformation initiative and imaging strategy started in FY 2019 and is expected to be completed in FY 2020. The funds added to the DCF budget supplement the KDHE funds to complete this phase of the upgrade. Any funds not spent on these activities in FY 2019 will be reappropriated to FY 2020 due to timing.</p>	1,581,613	3,675,605	3,053,849	7,097,024
<p>2.5% Raise for all State Employees (estimated) All staff will receive a 2.5% pay increase in FY 2020.</p>			1,898,681	3,414,065
<p>OITS Modernization – Data Center Statewide Initiative The Legislature funded half of the projected annual costs for Data Center as a Service (DCaaS). This project moves servers, data storage and disaster recovery activities from outdated and inadequate data centers to modern data centers operated by a third party. The Data Center as a Service will start in early FY 2020.</p> <p>The other half of the projected annual costs due to OITS (\$1,972,207 AF, \$1,096,163 SGF removed in Conference Committee) will have to be requested as a supplemental in next year’s budget.</p> <p>OITS Modernization also included the Centralized Service Desk (\$295,490 AF, \$164,235 SGF in FY 2020) and Mainframe as a Service (\$3,577,868 AF, \$1,435,685 SGF in FY 2020) which was not funded by the Legislature. The Centralized Service Desk went live in FY 2019, and agencies will be billed in FY 2020. The Mainframe went live 2 years ago, and OITS is currently billing. The agency plans to request supplemental funding in the next budget process and cover current expenses with other program savings.</p>			1,096,162	1,972,207
TOTAL DCF ADJUSTMENTS	8,306,054	9,115,426	49,414,018	66,890,102

Summary of Adjusted Approved Budget by Program

Approved Budget by Major Program	FY 2018 Actual All Funds	FY 2019 Approved All Funds	FY 2020 Approved All Funds
PPS	254,274,116	287,506,456	323,390,236
EES	124,689,489	151,095,332	159,907,271
CSS	35,767,906	37,674,275	36,493,072
RS	30,834,648	37,260,328	37,264,219
Licensing	2,534,315	2,759,337	2,728,719
IT	30,624,665	29,734,908	34,757,571
Administration (Exec, Admin, Legal, Audits, Strategic Dev., Personnel)	13,784,323	15,887,844	15,547,704
Regional EES	35,454,332	34,630,948	34,675,715
Regional VR	7,134,724	7,843,110	7,893,024
Regional PPS	34,642,612	36,601,261	44,401,961
Regional Admin	29,947,088	30,599,309	31,013,277
DD Council and FBCI	1,435,926	2,045,400	2,065,845
Capital Improvements	32,661	250,000	123,276
Transfers and Reconciliations	15,094,953	15,688,247	15,663,247
Total DCF	616,251,758	689,576,755	745,925,137

Note: The 2.5% raise for state employees is not allocated to programs above.





Legislative Update



DCF Legislative Team

- Rebekah Gaston
Director of Policy
Director of Economic and Employment Services
- Ethan Belshe
Legislative Liaison

STAKEHOLDER
MEETING
SPRING
2019
KANSAS DEPARTMENT
FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Legislative Update

Legislative Successes

- Budget enhancements
 - Family First Prevention Services Act*
 - 42 additional child welfare staff positions *
 - Funding for continued exploration of CCWIS upgrades*
- Substantive bills
 - SB 15 – social worker licensing reciprocity
 - SB 199 – created A-OK to work program
 - HB 2103 – statutory changes to comply with FFPSA

* Recommended by Child Welfare System Task Force



Legislative Update

Other notable bills

- Signed by the governor
 - SB 77 – requires DCF to refer children with problem sexual behavior to counseling services
 - SB 108 – increases criminal penalties for abuse of a child and involuntary manslaughter and exempts certain victims from being considered an aggressor
 - HB 2360 – allows KBI to conduct background checks of employees and volunteers that have unsupervised access to children, the elderly or individuals with disabilities



Legislative Update

Other notable bills

- Not reported out of committee
 - SB 12, HB 2157, HB 2342 – cut back barriers to safety net programs in Kansas*
 - HB 2090 – required DCF, KDADS, KDOL and KS BOE to register voters
 - HB 2096 – created individual savings accounts for children
 - HB 2359 – established child welfare system delivery task force*

* Recommended by Child Welfare System Task Force



Legislative Update

Budget Provisos

- DCF to assemble working groups and submit reports by June 30, 2019, and Nov. 1, 2019, on the impact of 2016 SB 367 on youth in state custody (cross-over youth)
- Requires the Managed Care Organizations (MCOs) to prepare quarterly reports on Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities waitlists (in KDHE budget)
- KDOC to conduct research on recidivism rates for youth with juvenile offender adjudications



Legislative Update

Looking Ahead

- Continue to pursue Child Welfare System Task Force recommendations through both legislative and administrative action
- Ensure that children and families have access to the supports they need
- Pursue policies that protect children and strengthen communities



Legislative Update



Tier 1

Workforce

Invest in the child welfare system workforce by increasing funding for recruitment, retention, and support to effectively attract and retain high quality staff.

- 42 New Positions FY 19-20
- Paid Practicums
- Recruitment and Retention Funds
- Flexible Work Schedule
- Forensic Training and Development
- Coaching Support Model

Child Welfare System Task Force Update

Tier 1

Data Infrastructure

Create a single, cross-system, web-based, integrated case management and data reporting system.

- Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System (CCWIS)
- Placement Management System



Child Welfare System Task Force Update

Tier 1

Family First Act

Fund and institute the federal Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA).

- Prevention (\$13 million)
- Kinship Navigator
- Placement in Family-Like Settings
- Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTP)
- DCF Community Meetings



Child Welfare System Task Force Update

Tier 1

Access to Care

Require access to high-quality and consistent medical and behavioral health care for Medicaid-eligible, high-risk youth through the Medicaid state plan or other appropriate sources of funding.

- Medicaid Liaison
- High Needs and Foster Care in KanCare Workgroup
- Mental Health in Schools Project
- New requirements for Managed Care Organizations
 - Community service coordination
- New AAP Medical History Form



Child Welfare System Task Force Update

Tier 1

Code for Care of Children

The Judicial Council should review the Code for Care of Children, especially with regards to:

- a) The way DCF's definition of "nonabuse neglect" relates to cases under the CINC code
- b) Modifications to meet the child's ongoing best interests for permanency
 - NAN to FINA
 - DCF attorneys work regularly with Judicial Council



Child Welfare System Task Force Update

Tier 2

Foster Care Re-entry and Transitional Services

Provide young adults age 18-21 with the option to seamlessly re-enter the child welfare system and ensure continuity in medical, behavioral health and support services for youth who have exited the custody of DCF.

- DCF Independent Living Program
- You thrive
- Regional IL Support Workers
- No formal discussion occurred in the most recent legislative session



Child Welfare System Task Force Update

Tier 2

Service Setting

Prioritize delivering services for children and youth in natural settings, such as, but not limited to, homes, schools, and primary care offices, in the child's community when possible. The needs of the child and family should be the most important factor when determining the settings where services are delivered.

- Family First Act Approach
- Foster Care Case Management Grants
- Family Team Decision-Making
- Placement Array Relative Rate and Support



Child Welfare System Task Force Update

Tier 2

Reintegration Support

Provide consistent, individualized, evidence-based support throughout reintegration for children in need of care and caregivers, including, but not limited to, parents and foster parents.

- Foster Care Case Management
- Supports to Families



Child Welfare System Task Force Update

Tier 2

Foster Homes

Invest in foster home recruitment and retention by increasing funding for supplemental training and providing additional financial incentives that support older youth, high-needs children, and birth families, as well as modifying licensing requirements.

- Foster Parent Training
- Caregiver Support Grant
- Array of Rates



Child Welfare System Task Force Update

Tier 2

Analysis of Service

Establish a work group or task force to conduct an analysis to:

- 1) Determine what it costs to adequately fund high-quality child welfare services;
- 2) By 2021, evaluate the benefits of privatizing child welfare services; and
- 3) Determine the best public/private collaboration to deliver child welfare services.

DCF shall determine appropriate outcome measures, and periodic evaluations shall be conducted to ensure contractors are achieving set outcomes and provide opportunities for ongoing collaboration and review. Summary reports should be provided to the Legislature semi-annually.

- A workgroup has not yet been established.
- Foster Care Case Management grants include outcomes required by federal program standards and state program goals focused on safety, permanency and wellbeing.



Child Welfare System Task Force Update

Tier 2

Safety Net, Early Childhood Programs & Early Intervention

Fully fund, strengthen, and expand safety net and early childhood programs through public services (DCF, mental health, substance abuse, and education) and community-based partner programs, and reduce barriers for families needing to access concrete supports. The State of Kansas should ensure availability and adequate access to early childhood behavioral health services statewide. The Task Force recommends consideration of related Mental Health Task Force recommendations 1.2 (Medicaid Expansion Models), 1.3 (Housing), 3.1 (Regional Model), and 6.4 (Early Intervention).

- Family First Foster Care Prevention Grants
- Home Visitation Grants
- Care Portal
- Child Care Grant
- Safety Net Programs



Child Welfare System Task Force Update

Tier 2

Information Sharing

Establish a multi-disciplinary approach and share information across and among stakeholders, irrespective of state borders, in accordance with federal and state laws.

- CCWIS Funding
- Placement Matching System



Child Welfare System Task Force Update

Tier 2

Non-Abuse Neglect Newborn Response

Provide differential responses for newborns and refer them to evidence-based services.

- DCF Universal Infant Referral – policy effective July 1, 2019



Child Welfare System Task Force Update

Tier 2

Relative Search

Ensure diligent search for relatives for possible placement begins immediately when a child is removed from the home. DCF should establish benchmarks for relative identification and shall monitor related outcomes, such as number of relatives identified within the first 30 days, number of children in relative placements and length of time for the child to reach that placement, and number of relatives contacted. DCF should regularly report on these benchmarks and outcomes to the Legislature.

- Family Finding Practices
- Team Decision-Making



Child Welfare System Task Force Update

Tier 3

Immediate Response

The State of Kansas should provide immediate response 24/7 to hotline calls and dedicated immediate response investigators to be dispatched, when warranted.

- The Kansas Protection and Reporting Center
- No effort has occurred for the 24/7 response by investigators for FY 20



Child Welfare System Task Force Update

Tier 3

Front-End Staffing

DCF should employ highly skilled and experienced front-end child welfare staff.

- Training for Front-End Staff
- Paid Practicum Students
- Additional Supports
- Higher Wages



Child Welfare System Task Force Update

Tier 3

Case Plans

Restructure the case plan process to improve coordination of services among all stakeholders to strengthen collaboration in the case.

- ‘Ice Breaker’ model
- Case Plan Process



Child Welfare System Task Force Update

Tier 3

Post-Adoptive Support

Ensure both federal and state subsidies to adoptive families and implement best practices for post-adoptive support services.

- Adoption assistance and post adoption services through K-PARC (KCSL grant for Adoption Resource Center)



Child Welfare System Task Force Update

Tier 3

Maximizing Federal Funding

Conduct an audit of potential funding streams by program area to ensure the State is maximizing federal benefit.

- Effort for an external auditor has not yet been initiated.
- New federal funds through Family First, and for CCWIS development.



Child Welfare System Task Force Update

Tier 3

Resources and Accountability

Provide services that are in the best interest of children in their care by supporting a system that is accountable and resourced well enough to provide the needed services. Considerations should include, but not be limited to, the awarding of funds based upon qualifications and not financial factors; improving workforce morale and tenure; and providing technology to improve efficiencies.

- Additional positions
- Staff coaching models
- University partnerships
- Recruitment, flexible work schedule
- Evidence-based tools and program supports



Child Welfare System Task Force Update

Tier 3

Serious Injury Review

In accordance with federal and state confidentiality laws, formalize a Serious Injury Review Team to establish and conduct a review process both internally and externally for an immediate and necessary response when a child dies or suffers serious bodily injury after having previous contacts with DCF Protection and Prevention Services concerning prior abuse and neglect.

- DCF critical incident policy is being reviewed and updated for July 2019.
- Federal Victims of Crime grant application – practices to prevent recurrent child abuse injuries and fatalities (Wichita site).



Child Welfare System Task Force Update

Tier 3

Court Appointed Special Advocates

The Legislature shall fund Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASAs) to ensure the availability of CASA volunteers in all jurisdictions, without disrupting the current funding CASAs receive from the State of Kansas.

- No specific action



Child Welfare System Task Force Update

Tier 3

Physical Access

The Legislature should fund increased physical access between children in need of care and their families, as well as ensure that families are supported in accessing services as required by the case plan.

- Policy requires naturally occurring interactions weekly
- Full-service array





Foster Care Licensing and Background Checks Division Update

Action Points

- Regulation updates. Revision of current Family Foster Home and Child Placing Agency regulations has begun. We look forward to working with our community partners and stakeholders during this process. Projected completion date is early 2020.
- Training development. A training program and curriculum is being established for both internal and external purposes. Designated personnel will provide outreach and online training services to assist our licensees and partners throughout the state.
- Policies and procedures. Collaborative efforts to revise existing Licensing policies to assure timeliness and further utilize technology are ongoing. Streamlined, more efficient processes will allow for shorter timelines with the licensing process.
- Livescan technology. In addition to standard ink fingerprinting equipment statewide, Livescan fingerprint machines will soon be available in some DCF offices. Utilization of such technology will assist in meeting the increasing demands for background checks.

Numbers

Foster Care Licensing (01/01/2019 – 05/31/2019)

Applications for license received 503

Licenses Issued

Temporary Permits	119
Full Licenses	<u>395</u>
Total	514

Background Checks (01/01/2019 – 05/31/2019)

Fingerprint checks processed 5,345

WHO IS IMPACTED BY CHILD SUPPORT?

COURTS

Support Orders Established

FFY 2012	13,340
FFY 2017	9,710

Paternity Established or Acknowledged

FY 2015	13,322
FY 2017	13,413

CHILDREN

Children in IV-D Cases

FFY 2012	143,889
FFY 2017	144,524

Current Support Distributed

FFY 2012	\$132,018,629
FFY 2017	\$137,767,787

Arrears Distributed

FFY 2012	\$59,711,806
FFY 2017	\$58,372,960

EMPLOYERS

Collections Received from Wage Withholding (both IV-D and Non-IV-D)

FFY 2012	\$270,016,642
FFY 2017	\$284,683,450

TAXPAYERS

FTE Positions

FFY 2012	562
FFY 2017	417

Cost Effectiveness

For every dollar spent in the program, the collection of support is:

FFY 2012	\$3.76
FFY 2017	\$5.72

2017 data:

https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/programs/css/fy_2017_preliminary_data_report.pdf?nocache=1529610354

2012 and 2015 data:

https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/programs/css/fy_2016_annual_report.pdf



Economic and Employment Services Update

The Economic and Employment Services division provides a variety of services including cash assistance, food assistance, energy assistance and child care scholarships. It also provides employment support services to help individuals find and keep a job.

Apply online at <https://cssp.kees.ks.gov/apsspssp/sppNonMed.portal>.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

TANF is a federally funded program that provides monthly cash assistance to a family that has low income and few resources. TANF also provides support services for work, training, work activities and education. Recipients must have at least one child under 18 in the home or be expecting a child. In some cases where children are placed with grandparents or other relative caregivers, a child-specific case can be opened based only on the child's income.

Child Care Scholarships

Families that have income at or below 185% of the federal poverty level are eligible to receive financial assistance to purchase quality child care if parents/caretakers are employed at least 28 hours per week. Assistance amounts vary based on individual circumstances and income; the majority of families will be responsible for a share of their child care expenses. Other child care assistance includes benefits for foster caregivers working or in school, high school students with children and some post-secondary students who are working at least 15 hours per week.

Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP)

LIEAP is a federally funded program that helps eligible households one time per year pay utility bills. Benefits are sent directly to a participant's utility company. Income eligibility is 130% of the federal poverty level.

Food Assistance/Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

Food assistance is 100% federally funded through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, providing a monthly benefit which can be used only to purchase approved food items. Participants receive their benefits on an electronic benefit transfer card. Income eligibility is 130% of the federal poverty level.

Employment Services

TANF recipients are required to participate in the TANF employment services program, through which they receive work-related support services including training, transportation, child care and other services.

Food assistance recipients can access employment programming through the GOALS program and the Food Assistance Employment and Training Program. GOALS provides employment services to adults with dependents, and offers child care, training, and other wraparound support services. The Food Assistance Employment and Training program provides employment services to adults without dependents in Johnson, Sedgwick, Shawnee and Wyandotte Counties.



Rehabilitation Services Update

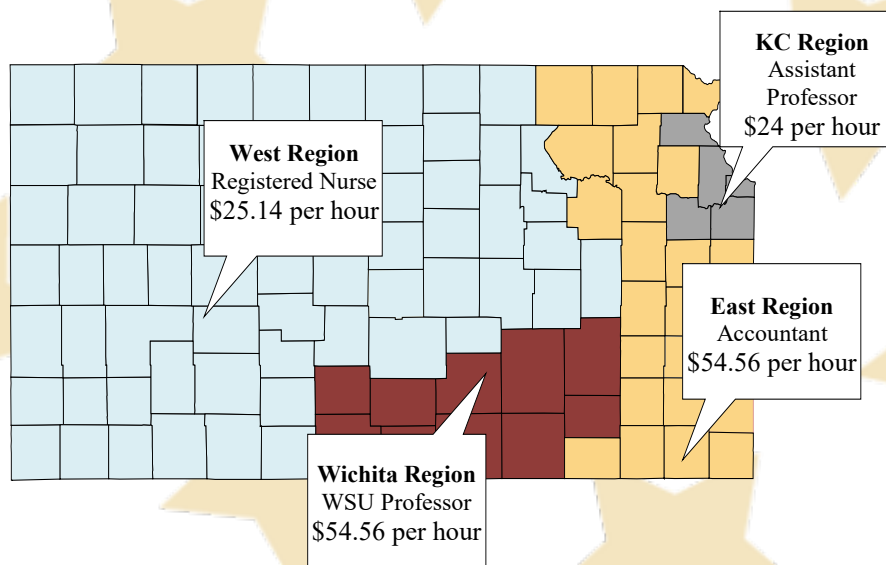
Driven by Employment

Empowering Kansans with disabilities to achieve their employment goals is the driving force of the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program. From July 2018 through May 2019 (SFY 2019 YTD), the VR program has resulted in the following successes for Kansans with disabilities:

- 1,633 individuals started employment.
- 1,121 have already reached the VR successful case closure milestone of stable employment for at least 90 days. This also means that the employer is satisfied with the individual’s performance, and continued employment is expected. These outcomes represent an 8% increase compared to the same time period last year.
- The average hourly wage earned is \$10.89.
- A total of 75.8% of persons employed report their own income as their largest source of support, a significant milestone toward self-sufficiency and less reliance on public benefits.

Dispelling Myths about Employment of People with Disabilities

Dispelling common misperceptions about the employment potential of people with disabilities, the following are examples of high-wage employment outcomes achieved by individuals working at least 40 hours per week (SFY 2019 YTD).



Expedited Access to Services

The more quickly an individual can begin receiving VR services, the more likely there will be employment success. Therefore, a major goal of RS is to facilitate expedited processes for applications, eligibility determination, development of Individual Plans for Employment, and delivery of services. Currently, the average timeframe for eligibility determination is only 18 days compared to the 60 days allowed by federal regulation.

This emphasis on quick access to services recently benefited a consumer in northeast Kansas. The consumer had been employed as a janitor/stocker for 11 years at a grocery store until the business closed unexpectedly. The client was nervous about what his future would hold and decided to apply for VR services. The timeframe from his date of application to his first day on his new job was only 26 days. The consumer and his mother recently told the VR counselor that they were very happy with the process and with the new job.

For Students with Disabilities, the Future Begins Now

A total of 955 students with disabilities throughout the state are currently receiving Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS). Pre-ETS is intended to prepare students for employment and/or post-secondary education. The most frequently used services are job readiness training and career exploration. Other services include work-based learning experiences and self-advocacy training. Research published in the Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation shows that participating in such services is a strong predictor of successful employment as adults, and therefore an important milestone toward self-reliance.

