

Welcome Stakeholders



2025
STAKEHOLDER
MEETINGS



Meeting Agenda



2025
STAKEHOLDER
MEETINGS

Welcome

Secretary Howard

Legislative Update

Andrea Warnke, Deputy Director of Government Affairs

Budget Update

Dan Lewien, Deputy Secretary

Program Updates

Tanya Keys, Deputy Secretary

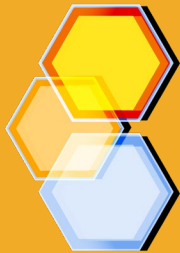
Federal Updates

Secretary Howard

Questions

Secretary Howard

Message from the Secretary



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DCF Legislative Session Update



Andrea Warnke, Deputy Director of Government Affairs



DCF Legislation that Failed to Pass



HB 2132: Modifying the Definition of Neglect

DCF introduced legislation that would have modified the definition of neglect in the Kansas code for care of children by:

- prohibiting the removal of a child from such child's home due solely to a lack of financial resources,*
- requiring that facts of serious harm demonstrate more than one fact of certain listed facts,*
- determining when a law enforcement officer may or shall take a child into custody*
- and requiring the secretary for children and families to provide means for a law enforcement officer to refer potential cases of abuse or neglect and provide a response to such referrals*

The bill was heavily worked in committee to address concerns by opponents but ultimately did not come above the line on the House floor. This means the bill is no longer eligible for consideration in the next year.

Reducing Secure Care Stays



HB 2076

DCF introduced legislation that would have reduced the authorized number of days that a child could be placed in a secure facility from 60 to 45.

The bill did not receive a hearing and is still eligible to be worked during next year's session.

Legislation Enacted by the 2025 Kansas Legislature



Expedited Permanency & Response to Law Enforcement Reports

HB 2075

*DCF introduced legislation to **reduce the time** between CINC permanency hearings from 12 to 9 months.*

The bill was amended in committee to require subsequent permanency hearings be held every 6 months

In conference committee there were amendments which:

- requires the court to review the involvement and receipt of written permanency plans by the parents and interested parties during each permanency hearing.
- requires law enforcement officers to explore options other than taking a child into custody
- requires the Secretary to receive law enforcement referrals related to a child who may be the victim of abuse or neglect and provide an update to the referring law enforcement agency within 24 hours of contacting the subjects of the investigation

This bill passed both chambers unanimously. Signed into law April 8.

Office of Early Childhood



HB 2045

Established the Office of Early Childhood and updated laws regulating childcare centers and childcare homes.

The establishment of the Office will create greater transparency, safety, and efficiency to Kansans with oversight of all funds, programs and policies relating to early childhood care services provided in Kansas.

The bill includes a provision that the Office may enter into agreements with DCF for the administration of childcare subsidy payments. If executed, DCF would determine an applicant's eligibility for the childcare subsidy.

This bill was signed into law April 24.

HB 2359 emphasizes a person-centered philosophy requiring individualized plans for persons subject to guardianship or conservatorship. The petitioner will be required to consider less restrictive alternatives to guardianship, such as supportive decision-making arrangements or protective arrangements, before recommending full guardianship.

This approach recognizes that adults may need assistance with certain aspects of their lives without necessarily losing all decision-making authority.

The bill was signed into law on April 3.

Amending the Uniform Adult Guardianship, Conservatorship & Other Protective Proceedings Acts



HB 2359

Protection of Foster Parent Beliefs



HB 2311

House Bill 2311 prohibits the Secretary from adopting, implementing, or enforcing policies for selection as out-of-home or adoptive placement, custody, or appointment as permanent or SOUL custodian for a child in need of care that may conflict with sincerely held religious or moral beliefs regarding sexual orientation or gender identity.

It also creates a right of action for violations.

This bill was vetoed and overridden on April 10.

HB2217 expands the scope of the Inspector General within the Office of the Attorney General to include the audit, investigation, and performance review of all state cash, food, and health assistance programs.

In the bill would add the following definitions:

- ***“Cash assistance”*** would mean assistance that is administered and provided by the Secretary for Children and Families to individuals for a family’s ongoing basic needs;
- ***“Food assistance”*** would mean assistance that is administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and provided by the Secretary for Children and Families to individuals for eligible food products;

This bill was vetoed and overridden on April 10.

Office of Medicaid Inspector General Investigation Expansion



HB 2217

Legislative Oversight on Public Assistance Waivers and Expansion



HB 2240

2240 Requires legislative approval prior to any state agency **seeking or implementing a public assistance program waiver or other authorization from the federal government that expands eligibility for any public assistance program, increases cost to the state** or makes certain changes in services for persons with intellectual or developmental disabilities

When the legislature is not in session, the bill authorizes the legislative coordinating council to act on agency requests.

This bill was vetoed and overridden on April 10.

HB 2062 would amend law regarding child support to require such support be calculated from the date of conception.

It would also require the court to consider the value of a qualified retirement account in determination of child support orders, and to eliminate the exemption of such accounts from claims to collect child support.

Lastly the bill allows a personal exemption for any unborn child for the purposes of income taxation.

This bill was vetoed and overridden on April 10.

Child Support Orders Bundle



HB 2062

Help Not Harm Act



SB 63

Senate Bill 63 Creates the ‘help not harm act’ and

- restricts use of state funds to promote gender transitioning,
- prohibits healthcare providers from providing gender transition care to children whose gender identity is inconsistent with the child's sex,
- authorizes a civil cause of action against healthcare providers for providing such treatments,
- requires professional discipline against a healthcare provider who performs such treatment,
- prohibits professional liability insurance from covering damages for healthcare providers that provide gender transition treatment to children and adding violation of the act to the definition of unprofessional conduct for physicians.

This bill was vetoed and overridden on February 18.

DCF Budget Update

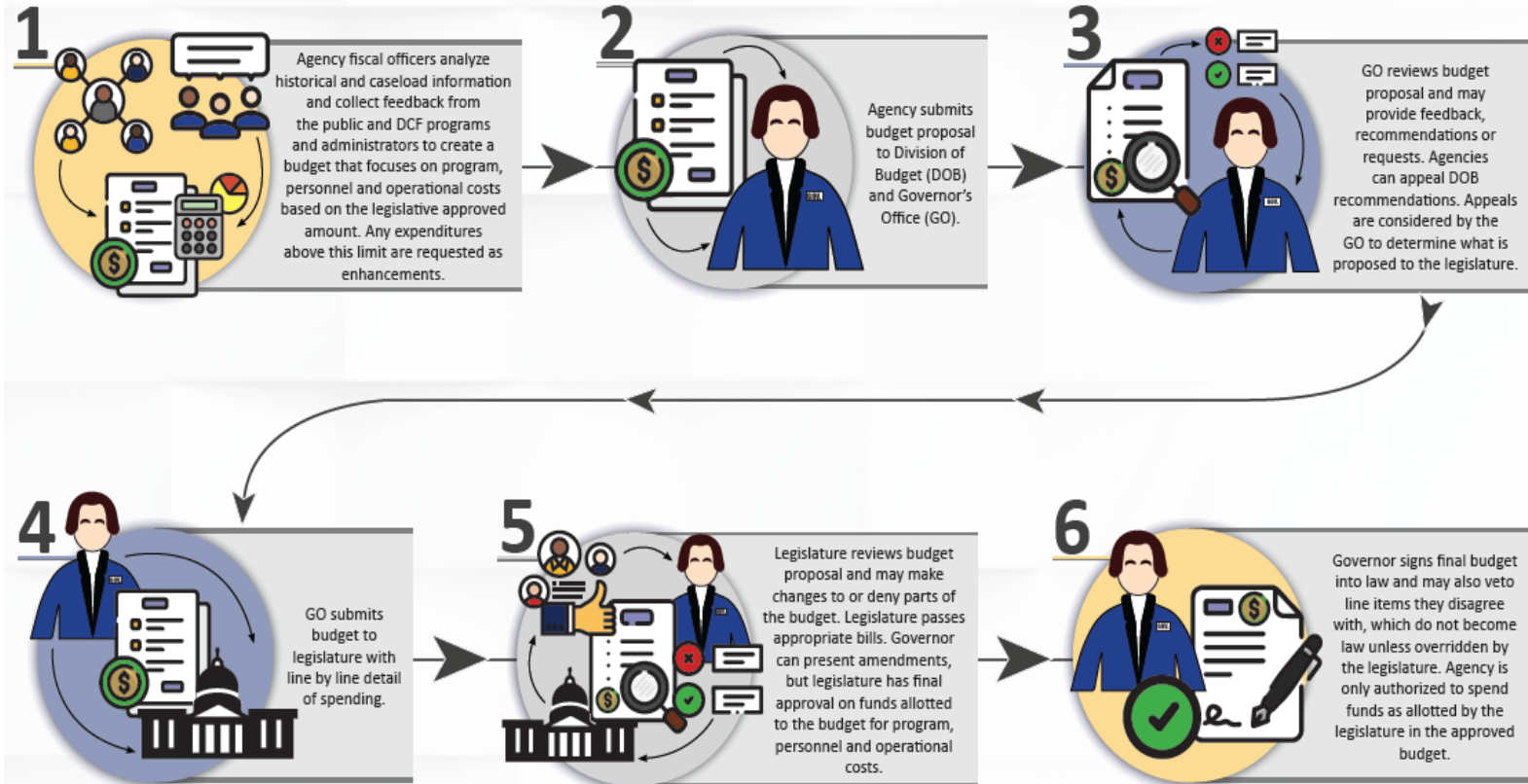


Dan Lewien, Deputy Secretary



2025
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Traditional Budget Cycle



Changes in Budget Process

2025 Legislature



Shorter Session

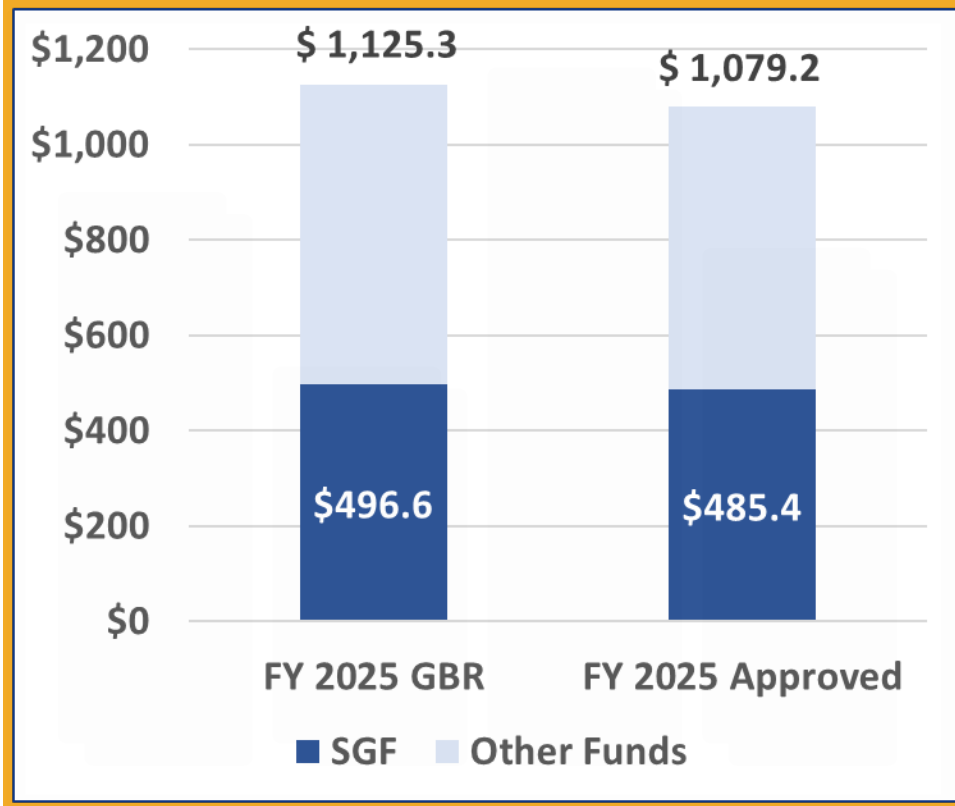
New Special Committee on the State Budget

Worked the Special Committee's Appropriation Bill versus the Governor's Budget Recommendation Bill

House Sub-committees finished working bill before Senate started

No Omnibus Session

FY 2025 GBR vs Approved Budget (MILLIONS)



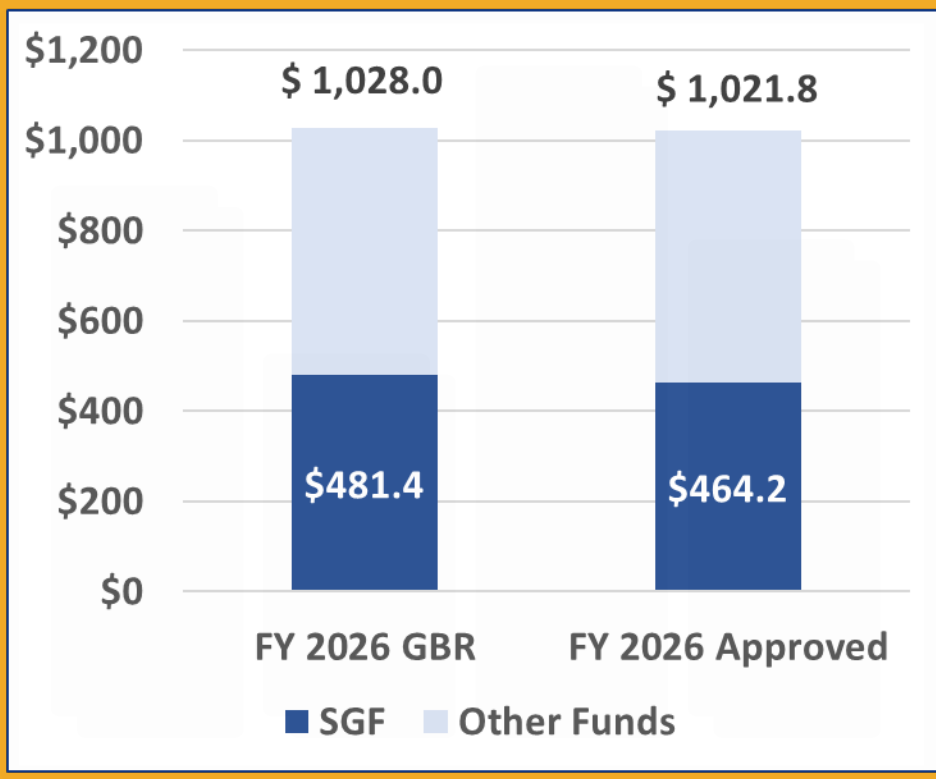
The approved budget is below the Governor's Budget Recommendation by \$46.1 million all funds and \$11.2 million SGF.

FY 2025 Budget Adjustments



Item	All Funds	SGF
Additions to Base Budget		
Fall Consensus Caseload	(1,400,001)	2,974,999
Spring Consensus Caseload	(3,944,000)	10,000,000
Correction to Consensus Caseload	997,737	997,737
Summer EBT Administration	3,650,000	1,825,000
Total	696,264	15,797,736
Reductions to Base Budget		
New KMIS System for VR	(4,005,434)	(853,157)
Development for Workload Management Software	(931,162)	(401,424)
Contract to Assist with McIntire Settlement	(505,000)	(505,000)
Amazon Connect Rate and Period Change Contract	(1,167,500)	(606,283)
Increases in Fees, Contracts, Leases, & Fed Funding Changes	(2,000,000)	(1,190,000)
Lower Shrinkage, Fund Fringe Benefits	(2,000,000)	(1,190,000)
Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System (CCWIS)	(22,000,000)	(11,000,000)
Other Reappropriations for Contracts and OOE	(3,520,917)	(5,246,677)
Total	(36,130,013)	(20,992,541)

FY 2026 GBR vs Approved Budget (MILLIONS)



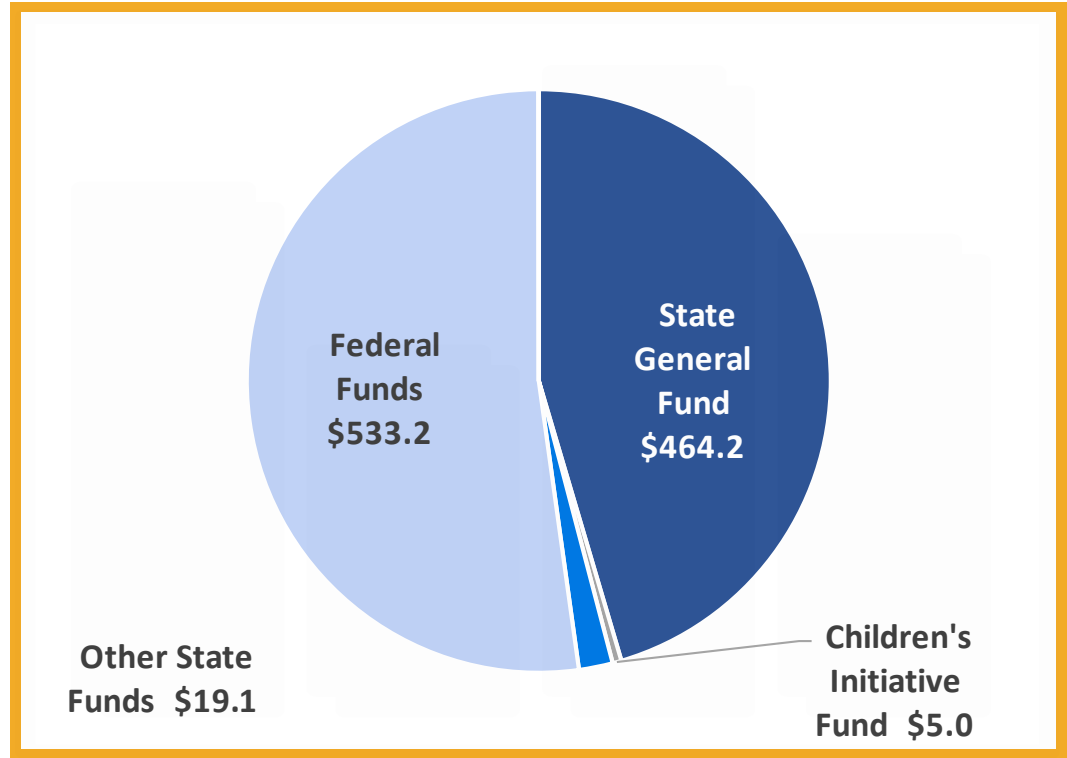
The approved budget is below the Governor's Budget Recommendation by \$6.3 million all funds and \$17.1 million SGF.

FY 2026 Approved Budget (MILLIONS)

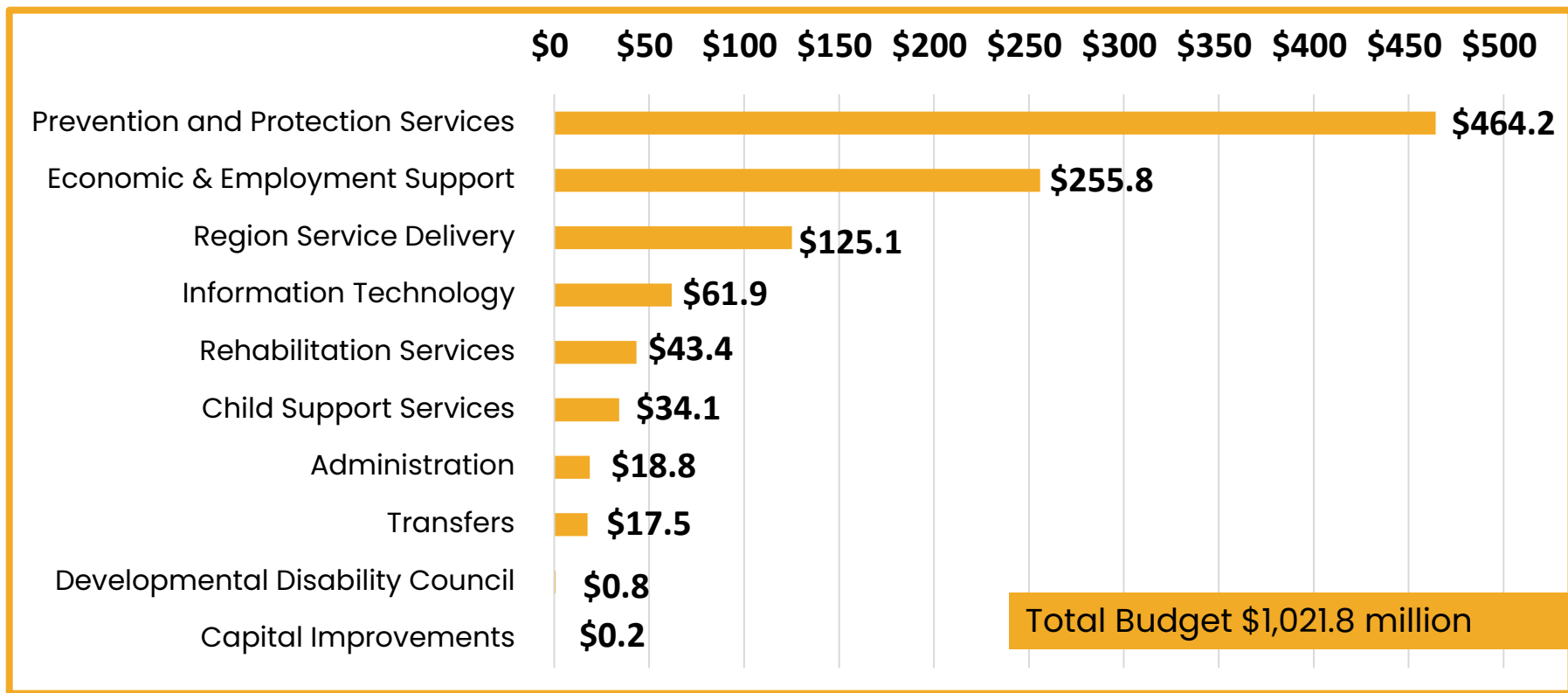
Total Budget **FY 2026**
\$1,021.8

Funding Sources

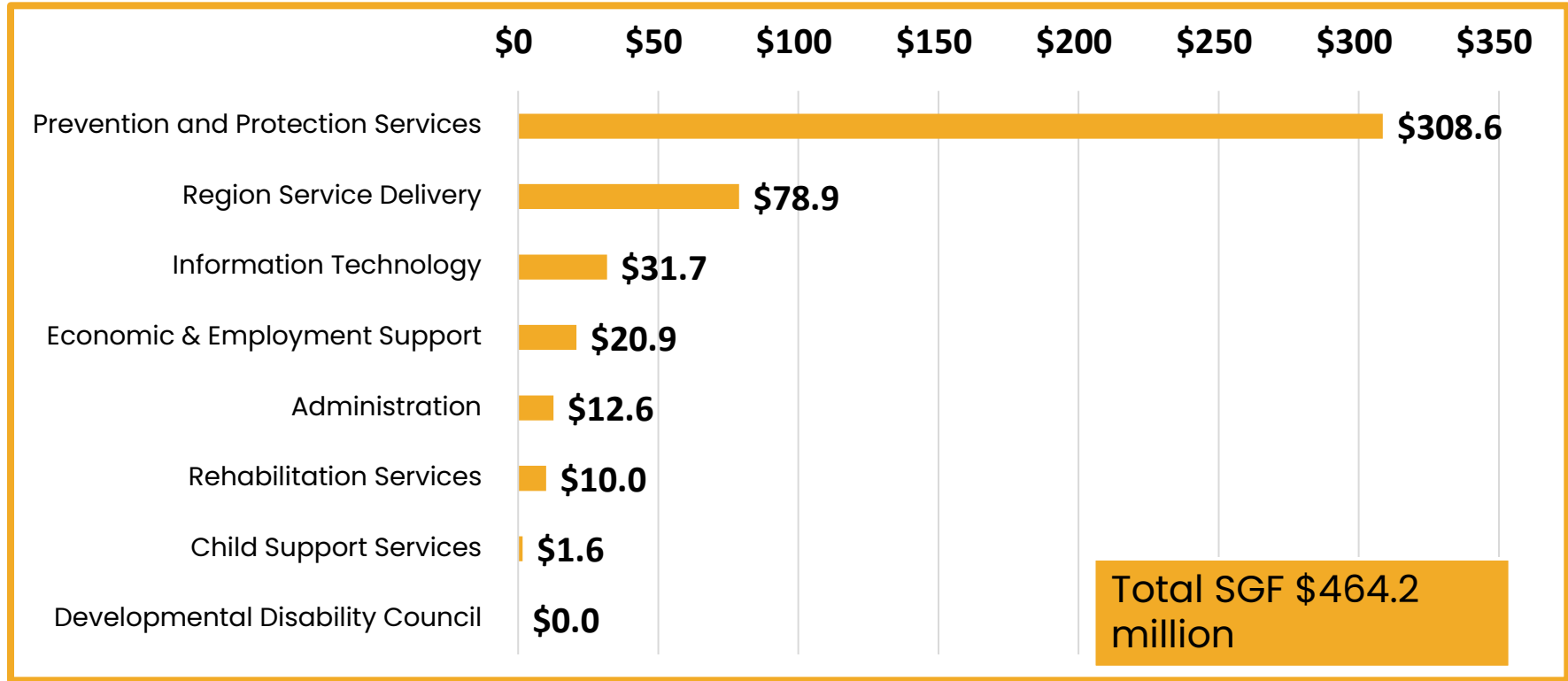
State General Fund	\$464.2
Children's Initiative Fund	\$5.0
Other State Funds	\$19.1
Federal Funds	\$533.2
Enterprise Funds	\$0.1
Total Funding	\$1,021.8



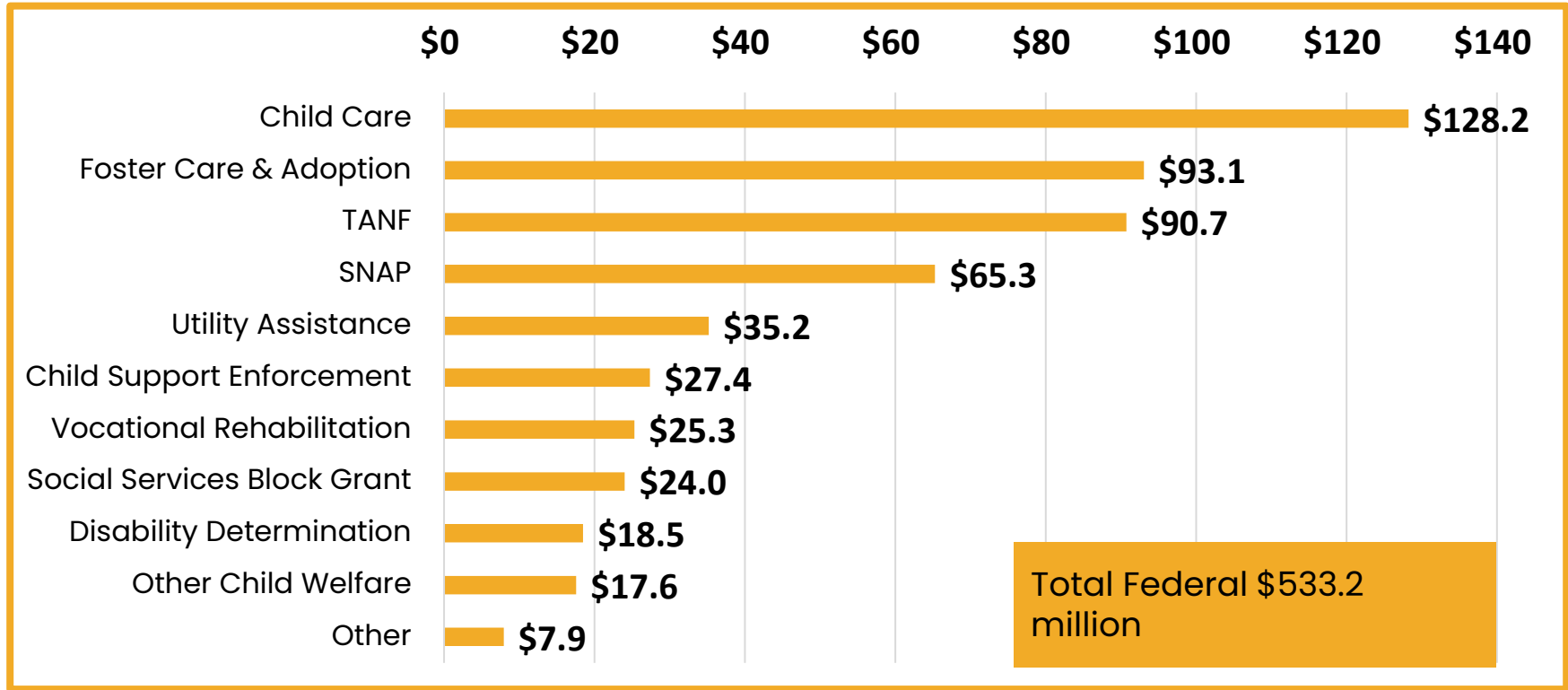
FY 2026 Approved Budget by Program (MILLIONS)



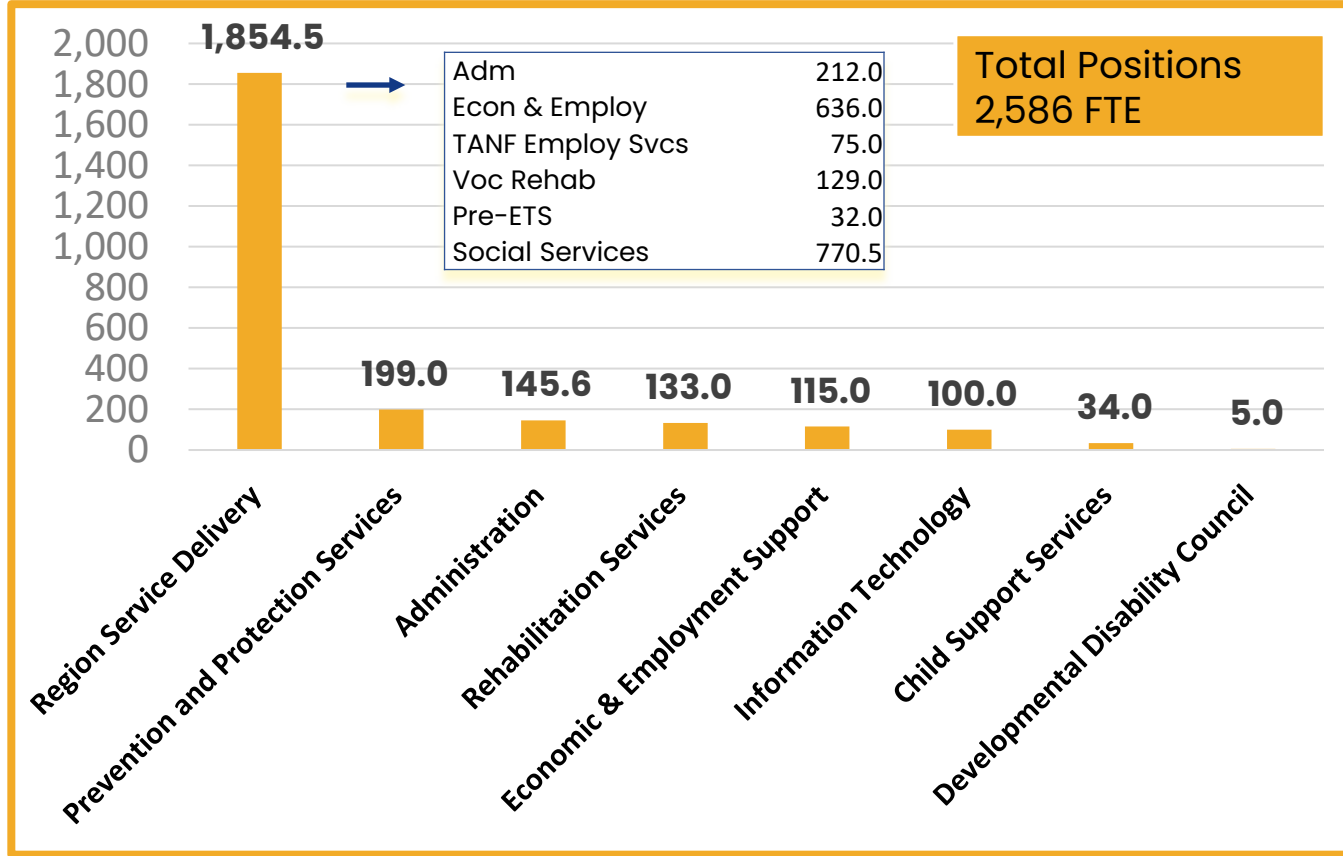
FY 2026 Approved SGF By Program (MILLIONS)



FY 2026 Approved Federal Funds (MILLIONS)



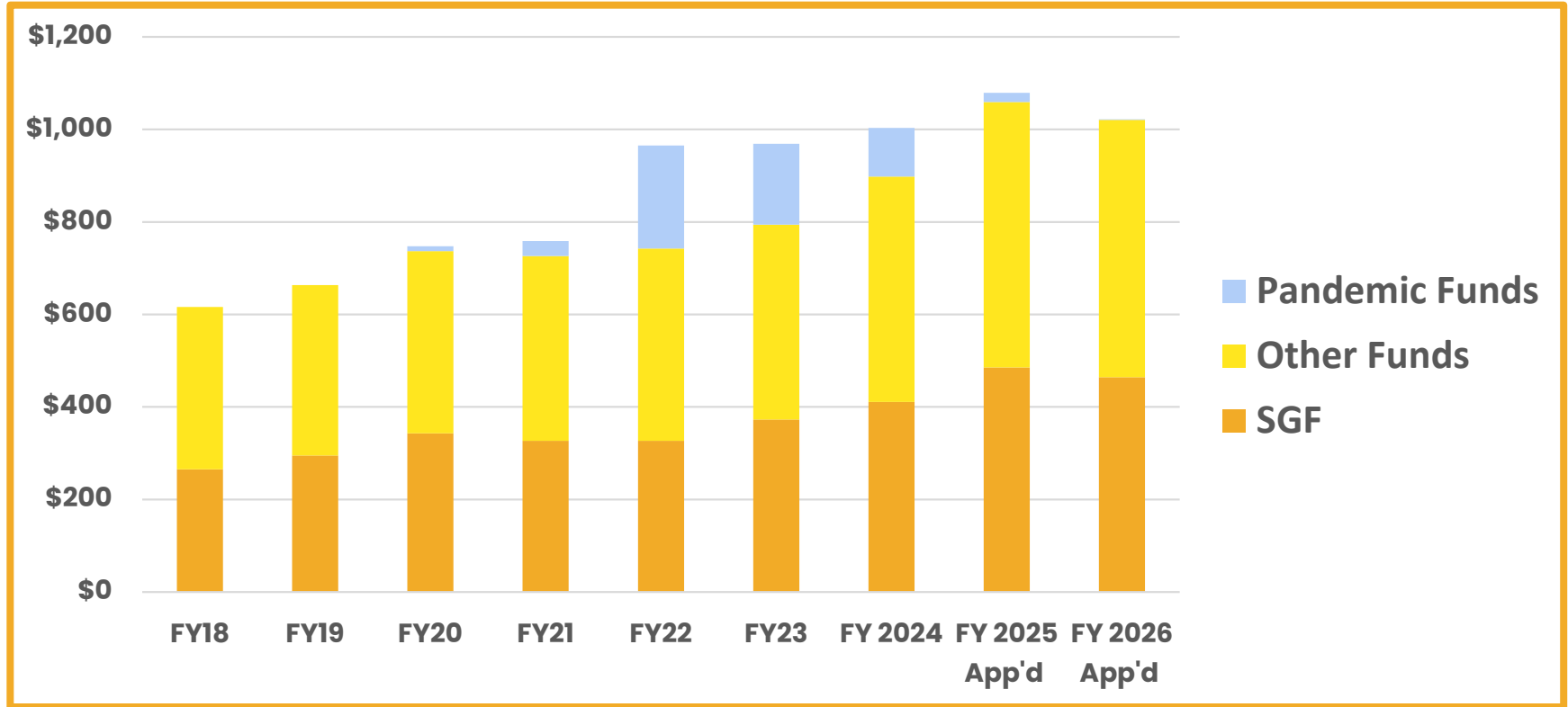
FY 2026 Approved Positions



As of April, there were 412 vacant positions representing 15.9% of authorized positions. DCF cannot fill all positions due to a shrinkage rate of 15.51%.

Shrinkage is the portion of annual salary costs that are not budgeted. This shortage is to account for 1. salary savings between the normal time a position is vacant when recruiting and hiring, and 2. costs of salaries that the agency does not have adequate funds to budget and has to leave vacant.

DCF Budget FY 2018 – FY 2026



FY 2026 Budget Adjustments

(in millions)



	All Funds	SGF
Submitted Budget	\$1,032.9	\$470.3
Governor's Enhancements	2.5	0.8
Legislative Adjustments	0.4	1.2
Consensus Caseload Adjustments	(14.1)	(8.1)
Vacant Position Reduction	TBD	TBD
1.5% State Operations SGF Reduction	TBD	TBD
Pay Plan	TBD	TBD
Total Adjustments to Base Budget	(\$11.1)	(\$6.1)
Total DCF Approved Budget	\$1,021.8	\$464.2

Notes: -The total includes transfers to other state agencies
- 1.5% reduction estimated to be about \$2.4 million SGF.

GBR Enhancements

Sun Bucks (Formerly Summer EBT)



Expense Category	All Funds	SGF
Salaries	71,695	35,848
Other Operating Expenses	1,578,305	789,152
Total	1,650,000	825,000

The Sun Bucks Program provides food benefits during the summer (when children are not receiving meals at school) to families below 185 percent of poverty. The benefit **per eligible child is \$120 for the summer**. An estimated 266,000 children are potentially eligible to receive benefits through this program.

- This enhancement funds the administration of the Sun Bucks Program, which requires a 50% state match. The funding covers the salary of a program administrator, contract staff to process applications, and the cost of issuing benefits through the EBT contractor.
- The benefits for the program, which are 100% federally funded, are not a part of this enhancement.



GBR Enhancements

Workload Management Software Licenses



Expense Category	All Funds	SGF
Other Operating Expenses	883,200	0

This enhancement funds 800 workload management software licenses that will be used to optimize caseload staffing, prevent unprocessed work backlogs, and meet requirements for case processing times.

- This software will help DCF process applications within federally-required time frames and prevent delays in benefits to needy families and children.
- This is the same software that Kansas Department of Health and Environment implemented to help manage workloads in their programs.
- The software provides real-time information regarding caseloads and alerts managers when processing thresholds are met or when action is needed. It allows priorities to be established in real time for unprocessed eligibility work, automated assignment of unprocessed work, and provides critical real-time operational data reports.

Note: The approved budget uses ARPA interest funds for the \$380,748 state match. This is a one-time funding source that will not be available in future years.

Legislative Adjustments

Guided Independent Living Assessment Pilot



Expense Category	All Funds	SGF
Grants	215,000	215,000

Additional funding was added for a pilot project with the Kansas Cerebral Palsy Research Foundation to assist young adults with disabilities in developing life skills.

- The project Guided Independent Living Assessment Program (GILA) – will assess the readiness of young adults with disabilities to live independently, with opportunities to learn and demonstrate basic living skills. The six-week program provides the participants a plan for future success.
- The project was developed in conjunction with Wichita State University
- This is a one-time expenditure.



Legislative Adjustments

Home-Based Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Expense Category	All Funds	SGF
Grants	600,000	600,000

Funding was added for a grant with Envision to provide blind-specific specialized and community-based services to individuals of all ages who are blind or have low vision.

- The services include:
 - Home-based services for children and blind parents/guardians
 - Independent living skills training
 - White cane training
 - Mental health support
 - Assistive technology
- Blind-specific services are critical and needed from birth, with demand increasing as individuals age.

This is a one-time expenditure.



Legislative Adjustments

One-on-One TANF Mentoring

Expense Category	All Funds	SGF
Grants	300,000	0

Funds were added to establish a grant for community-based and school-based mentoring for youth ages six to 25. Services would be available to youth at no cost by Kansas Big Brothers and Big Sisters.

- Achieving a living wage by age of 25 is the goal of the mentoring effort.
- This is a one-time expenditure of TANF funds.



KANSAS
**Big Brothers
Big Sisters®**

Legislative Adjustments

SparkWheel Program



Expense Category	All Funds	SGF
Grants	50,000	0

- Funding was added for the SparkWheel Program.
- Funding will be transferred from the Family and Children Investment Fund within the Kansas Department of Education.
- The program addresses gaps in support while providing children with the tools necessary to start school as ready as possible.
- SparkWheel is currently completing an initial year of early childhood work at the Family Resource Center in Pittsburg, Kansas.



Legislative Adjustments

Communication Access (KS Commission for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing)



Expense Category	All Funds	SGF
Grants	375,000	375,000

The additional funds will improve and centralize communication access services provided by state agencies, courts, and emergency management.

- The enhancement will centralize communication access for all state agencies and expand the capacity of the courts by providing legal communication access.
- The added funds cover additional positions and contracts for services.
- This addition was vetoed by the Governor over a concern with the limited geographic scope of interpreter services in Kansas, however the veto was overridden.

Legislative Adjustments

Child Care Workforce Registry



Expense Category	All Funds	SGF
Grants	(1,100,000)	(0)

- FY 2026 funding was removed from the budget for the Workforce Registry.
- The child care workforce registry was established by the 2024 Legislature. The purpose of the registry is to:
 - track the educational progression of child care providers
 - facilitate the improvement and supply of quality child care
 - assist in the assessment and development of child care providers' professional development.
- The Registry had been funded by the Children's Initiative Fund. The GBR requested the funding be changed from CIF to SGF due to declining balances in the Children's Initiative Fund. The funding change was not approved by the Legislature and all funds were removed.
- We plan to continue the Registry and are looking at funding options.

2026 Consensus Caseload Adjustments

Fall 2024 Consensus Caseload Estimate



This table represent the adjustments from the Fall 2024 consensus caseload estimate. These adjustments were included in the appropriation bill.

Item	All Funds	SGF	Explanation
TANF Caseload	\$400,000	\$0	▪ The TANF caseload remained relatively steady, in contrast to the previous assumption of a modest caseload decline.
Foster Care Caseload	(14,503,632)	(8,103,632)	▪ The change from retrospective to prospective payments to case management providers resulted in savings of \$10.2 million. This change required 13, rather than 12, payments in FY 2025. By the budget convention used for consensus caseloads, the funding for FY 2025 was continued into FY 2026, including the funds for the extra payment. The extra month of payments were removed. ▪ The declining caseload estimate resulted in \$1.7 million in placement savings and almost \$0.5 million savings in child placing agency payments. ▪ The declining caseload forecast also resulted in an estimated \$900,000 reduction in payments to case management providers whose payments are tied to caseload levels.
Total	(\$14,103,632)	(8,103,632)	

Consensus Caseload Adjustments

Spring 2025 Consensus Caseload Estimate



The following changes from the Spring consensus caseload estimate were not included in the appropriation bill.

Item	All Funds	SGF	Explanation
TANF Caseload	-\$200,000	\$0	■ 'The revised forecast assumes a slight decline in the TANF caseload.
Foster Care Caseload	-\$3,944,000	\$10,000,000	■ \$0 all funds and \$9.0m SGF was added for E.O. 25-01 which allows foster care children to retain federal benefits. This changed Fee Fund expenditures to SGF ■ \$1.9m all funds and \$8.2m SGF was added for the Relative Licensing policy change which failed to materialize. ■ \$5.6m all funds and \$4.4m SGF was added for a case management provider contract revision. ■ These increases were partially offset by anticipated savings from lower caseloads and some other funding changes.
Total	-\$4,144,000	\$10,000,000	

Pending Adjustments

Eliminate Vacant Positions



This future adjustment deletes funding for positions that were vacant during FY 2026 as of June 1, 2026.

- Agency loses the funding but maintains positions and the funding for the next year.
- The adjustment will be certified by the State Finance Council after the vacancies and associated salaries are determined at the close of FY 2026.
- This proviso assures that agencies can't use any salary savings from vacant positions for any other purpose.

Pending Adjustments

1.5% State Operations SGF Reduction



Expense Category	All Funds	SGF
Other Operating Expenses (Estimate)	(4,800,000)	(2,400,000)

- The exact impact of this reduction to administrative expenses has not been determined. The amounts above are estimates based on budgeted amounts.
- Prior to this reduction, DCF's Other Operating Expenditures were registering a shortfall in a work verification service contract, postage, printing, leases, and software costs. These shortfalls with the legislative reduction will have to be addressed when creating the 2026 budget. We are looking for savings in every administrative function and award.
- The reduction does not require an across-the-board reduction. It will be a combination of targeted reductions totaling \$2.4 million SGF.
- The same reduction was made to FY2027, however the Governor vetoed the FY2027 cut.

Pending Adjustments

FY 2026 Pay Plan



The FY 2026 Pay Plan provides the following increases:

Employee Pay Compared to Market Survey	Pay Change
Below market pay by 10.0% or more	The greater of: a. Increase to bring salary up to 10.0 of market pay b. 2.5% increase
Below market pay by less than 10.0% or Above market pay by up to 10.0%	2.5% increase
Above market pay by more than 10.0%	1.0% increase
Job not reflected in the market survey	2.5% increase

- The impact has not been determined.
- The funding will be released by the State Finance Council and increase the DCF budget.

Bills With Fiscal Impacts

Summary



	FY 2026		FY 2027	
	All Funds	SGF	All Funds	SGF
HB 2062 Child Support Order Changes	\$573,087	\$573,087	\$573,087	\$573,087
HB 2075 CINC Permanency Hearing within Nine Months	(7,059,494)	(4,869,639)	(7,059,494)	(4,869,639)
HB 2359 Recodification of APS Statutes	369,193	281,359	366,326	279,179
HB 2045 Establish Office of Early Childhood	-	-	(150,993,438)	(16,405,447)
Total	(\$6,117,214)	(\$4,015,193)	(\$157,113,519)	(\$20,422,820)

**These are estimated costs made during the session.*

***None of the estimates were funded by the Legislature.*



How to Participate and Provide Input

SUGGESTIONS & COMMENTS

The Kansas Department for Children and Families is taking suggestions and comments as we move through the 2026/2027 budget creation process.

CONTACT US

If you have questions or ideas for budget efficiencies, program changes, or anything you want the agency to consider, please share with us.

DCF.Budget@ks.gov

Program Updates



Deputy Secretary Tanya Keys



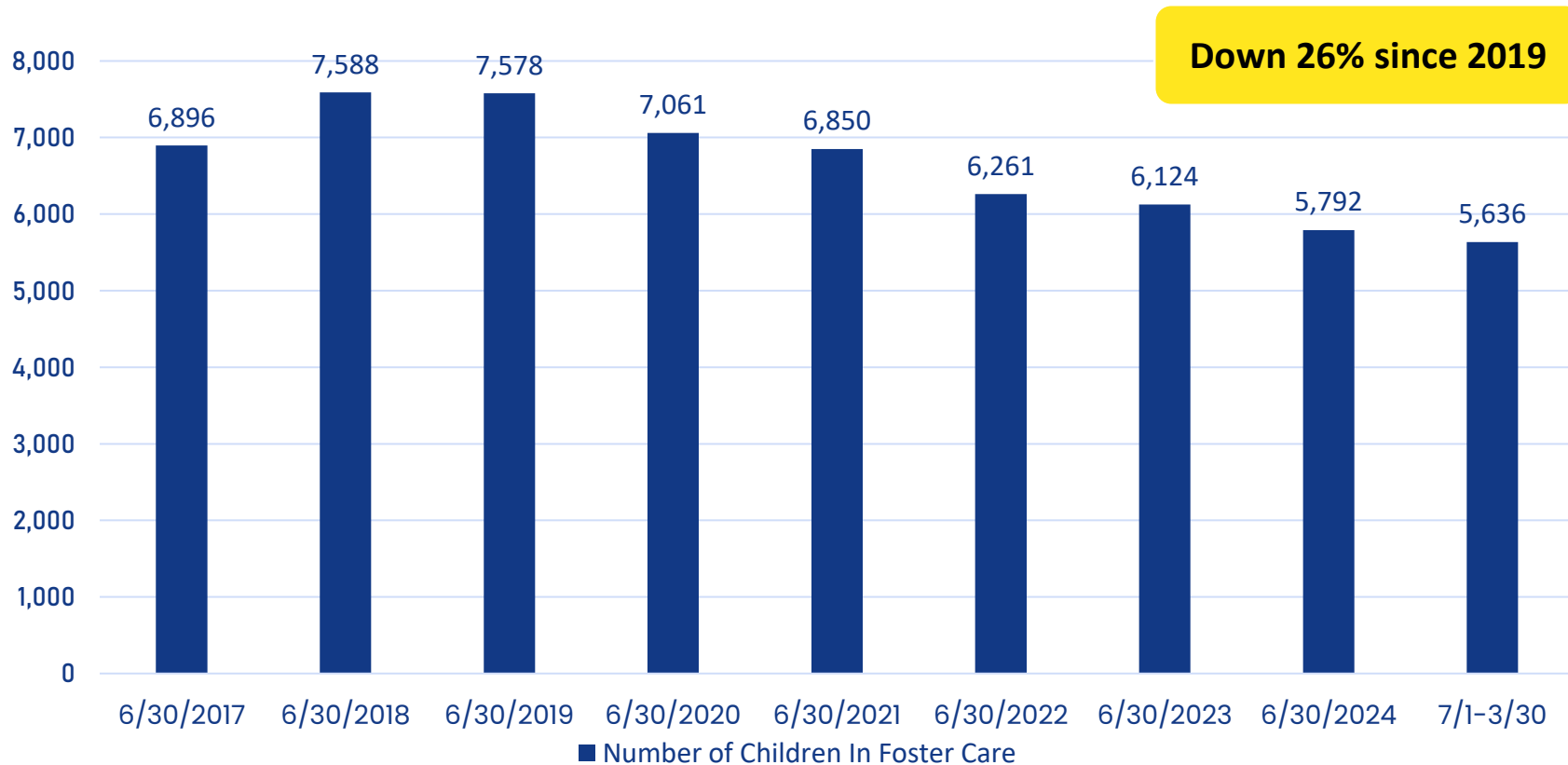
Economic and Employment Services

In February 2023, EES implemented One Kansas, establishing a statewide shared caseload for eligibility.



- Several efforts were made throughout 2024 to refresh standard operating procedures and solidify effective workload management to support One Kansas.
- Since the implementation of One Kansas, families are now receiving an eligibility determination in **fewer than 10 days**.

Number of Children in Foster Care



Therapeutic Family Foster Homes

Therapeutic Family Foster Homes (TFFH) capacity building contracts awarded and began March 1, 2024.

Innovative mix of service delivery options will include specific recruitment strategies and increased wraparound supports to resource families, biological families and youth.

- Some grants include collaboration with agencies who operate similar programs or support youth requiring a therapeutic level of care

DCF has approved **90 Therapeutic Family Foster Homes** (May 1, 2025)

- At least one home available in each DCF Region
- **Mockingbird Model launch** of first two family constellations scheduled for May.
- Cornerstones of Care In-Home Specialists have worked with **24 family preservation families** assisting with issues such as school attendance, support for youth attending virtual school, hygiene practices, bullying concerns at school as well as creating and following routines. Respite has been utilized with 9 children for a total of 118 nights

Therapeutic Family Foster Homes, *continued*

Cornerstones of Care Success Story

An in-home support specialist has been able to work very closely with a youth who was suspended from school and in legal trouble. The specialist collaborated with Families Together and the school to ensure that the child's educational needs were met, and the child has now returned to school.

The in-home specialist continues to advocate for this youth regarding their legal situation, assisting them in next steps necessary to successfully resolve the issues.



SOUL Family Legal Permanency



SOUL Family

SUPPORT • OPPORTUNITY • UNITY • LEGAL RELATIONSHIPS

During the first year of SOUL Family Legal Permanency being an option for young people experiencing foster care in Kansas more than 10 young people have achieved permanency with a SOUL Family Legal Permanency (FLP) Custodian.

SOUL Family Legal Permanency allows young people ages 16+ to achieve permanency with a network of supportive adults while retaining eligibility for benefits to the greatest extent possible.

DCF Staff and lived expert consultants partnered to train more than 1,000 child welfare stakeholders regarding this new permanency option.

A few highlights of the **first 10 young people** experiencing SOUL legal permanency

- Four DCF regions are represented
- Four occurred with the family who had been the young person's only placement
- Seven young people achieved permanency with a family located in their home county or an adjacent county
- Seven young people achieved permanency while placed with a relative

Executive Order 25-01 Preservation of Federal Benefits

Executive Order 25-01 requires DCF to **discontinue the prior practice** of reimbursing the state for the cost of foster care from benefits received by youth due to their own disability or the death, disability, or retirement of a parent.

- No funds reimbursed to DCF from benefit monies received after Jan. 1, 2025

ABLE bank accounts allow qualifying individuals with disabilities to save money without losing their federal benefits.

As of May 1, 2025:

- **520 ABLE accounts** have been opened for children and youth in custody
- **\$1,213,774.30** conserved for children and youth in custody

Executive Order 25-01 Preservation of Federal Benefits, *continued*

Notices will start going out by **July 1, 2025**. There will be **three types of notices** based on these events:

- DCF becomes Rep Payee of a child's benefit
- When an ABLE account has been established and needs transferred due to the permanency goal being achieved
- In January of each year, an accounting of benefits received and saved for the previous calendar year

Educational components are being designed in partnership between DCF, the State Treasurers Office (using their already existing ABLE Roadshow), the Kansas Council for Economic Education (KCEE) and Kansas Council for Developmental Disabilities (KCDD).

Thanks to KCDD's support KCEE will be able to engaged a retired educator to assist KCDD self advocates in creating vignettes explaining common scenarios that youth receiving ABLE accounts upon achieving permanency may encounter.

Collaborations with Law Enforcement

On April 14, Brenda Soto, Deputy Director of Medicaid and Children's Mental Health, attended the Chief of Police Conference in Mulvane, KS to represent the DCF booth.

During this event, FOUR Questions/Family Mobile Crisis Helpline/988 informational visor cards were provided by DCF representatives which aided in discussions surrounding prevention and access to needed mental health services and community-based interventions prior to family crises.

Attendance at this event included Chiefs of Police and juvenile intake specialists who were eager to receive the informational visor cards and showed immense interest to provide the cards to individual forces at a later date. The relational dialogue at the event provided an opportunity for DCF representatives to encourage attendees to connect with their regional DCF leadership in hopes that the visor cards and prevention discussions could continue the momentum forward with law enforcement partnerships in each region



Kansas City: Concentrated Foster Care Prevention Pilot

This pilot program was created to decrease the need for Foster Care for youth being released from PRTFs and Acute Facilities where caregivers/parents refuse to pick them up. DCCCA, who provides Family Preservation Services for the Kansas City Region, has taken on the assignment to assist DCF Child Protection Specialists when they meet with parents/caregivers who are reluctant to take their children home after release from these facilities.

Since implementation, several youth have been reunified with their families without entering into the Foster Care System. DCCCA provides resources and services to these families after reunification. We are now making plans to implement this process throughout the state in the other regions.

Federal Updates

Secretary Laura Howard



2025
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Federal Impacts



Downsizing
Federal Staff and
Federal
Restructuring

Enhanced
Oversight and
Accountability

Potential Budget
Reductions
*(President's Budget and
Pending Congressional
Action)*

Questions?

**Today's presentation will
be available online.**



stakeholder.dcf.ks.gov

Thank You For Joining Us

