

Welcome Stakeholders



2025
STAKEHOLDER
MEETINGS



Meeting Agenda



2025
STAKEHOLDER
MEETINGS

Welcome

Pamela Beach, Northwest Regional Director

Community Conversation Focus

Secretary Laura Howard

State and Federal Updates

Secretary Howard

Andrea Warnke, Deputy Director of Government Affairs

Budget Update

Dan Lewien, Deputy Secretary

Program Updates

Tanya Keys, Deputy Secretary

Questions

Secretary Howard

Message from the Secretary



2025
STAKEHOLDER
MEETINGS



Federal Updates

Secretary Laura Howard



2025
STAKEHOLDER
MEETINGS

Federal Impacts



Downsizing
Federal Staff and
Federal
Restructuring

Enhanced
Oversight and
Accountability

Potential Budget
Reductions
*(FY25 Reconciliation Bill and
FY26 President's Budget)*

Upon Enactment:

- **Work Requirements -**
 - Increases ABAWD SNAP work requirements age to 64 (up from 54)
 - Reduces the definition of "dependent child" from under 18 years of age to under 14.
- **SNAP Eligibility -**
 - Increases SNAP Eligibility Citizenship Requirements
 - Changes eligibility criteria used in Standard Utility Allowances & Excess Shelter Expense deductions

Effective 10/1/2025: Expiration of SNAP-ED Program

- Allows the National Education and Obesity Prevention Grant Program to expire after FY 2025

Effective 10/1/2026: Administrative Cost Sharing

- Increases the state share of SNAP administrative costs from 50% to 75% beginning in FY 2027

Effective 10/1/2027: State Matching Funds

- Requires states with an error rate >6% to contribute at least 5% of the cost of SNAP allotments beginning in FY 2028 with contribution rates increasing based on a state's SNAP error rate (up to 15%).

Federal Reconciliation Bill: SNAP Impacts



H. R. 1

President's FFY 26 Budget



The President's FY2026 budget proposal includes several changes that would affect DCF programs and stakeholders:

- Eliminates the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)
- Reduces CCDF Discretionary funding
- LIEAP funding eliminated, including advance appropriations from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.
- The President's Budget eliminates cash, medical assistance, and social services for refugees, asylees, and other arrivals eligible for refugee benefits.
- Maintains Child Support Enforcement, Foster Care, Adoption Assistance, Social Services Block Grant, Child Care Entitlements, and TANF funding.
- Increases the Promoting Safe and Stable Families grant by 15%.

DCF Legislative Session Update



Andrea Warnke, Deputy Director of Government Affairs



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 July 21, 2025:

- **561 ABLE accounts** have been opened for children and youth in custody
- **\$2,166,212.61** conserved for children and youth in custody

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

Notices being delivered as of **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 Treasurer's Office (using their 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 engage a retired educator to assist KCDD self advocates in creating vignettes explaining common scenarios that youth receiving ABLE accounts, upon achieving permanency, may encounter.

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 child care centers and child care 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 child care subsidy payments. If executed, DCF would determine an applicant's eligibility for the child care 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.

Other Overridden Legislature

HB2062: Child Support Order Bundle

- 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.

HB2217: Office of Medicaid Inspector General Investigation Expansion

- 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

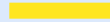
HB2240: Legislative Oversight on Public Assistance Waivers and Expansion

- 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.

SB 63: Help Not Harm Act

- 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, and creates disciplinary and civil action against healthcare providers who provide such treatments.

DCF Budget Update

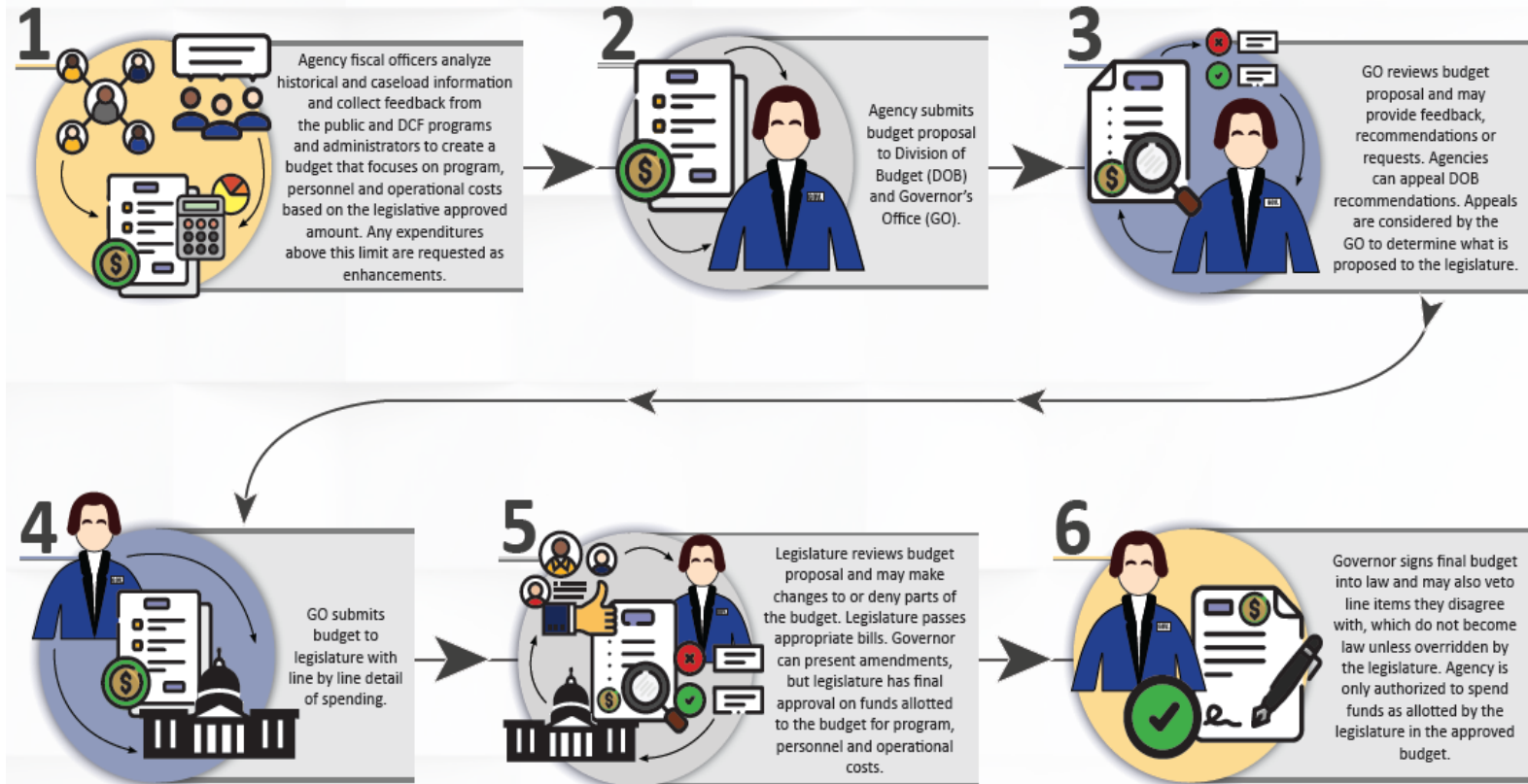


Dan Lewien, Deputy Secretary



2025
STAKEHOLDER
MEETINGS

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

Approved funding between fiscal years was removed (Reappropriations)

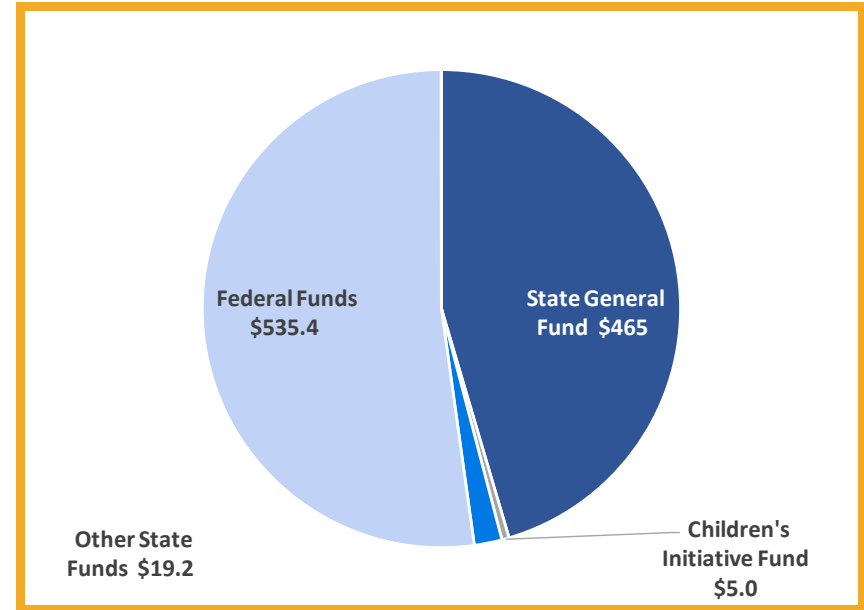
No Omnibus Session

FY 2026 Approved Budget (MILLIONS)

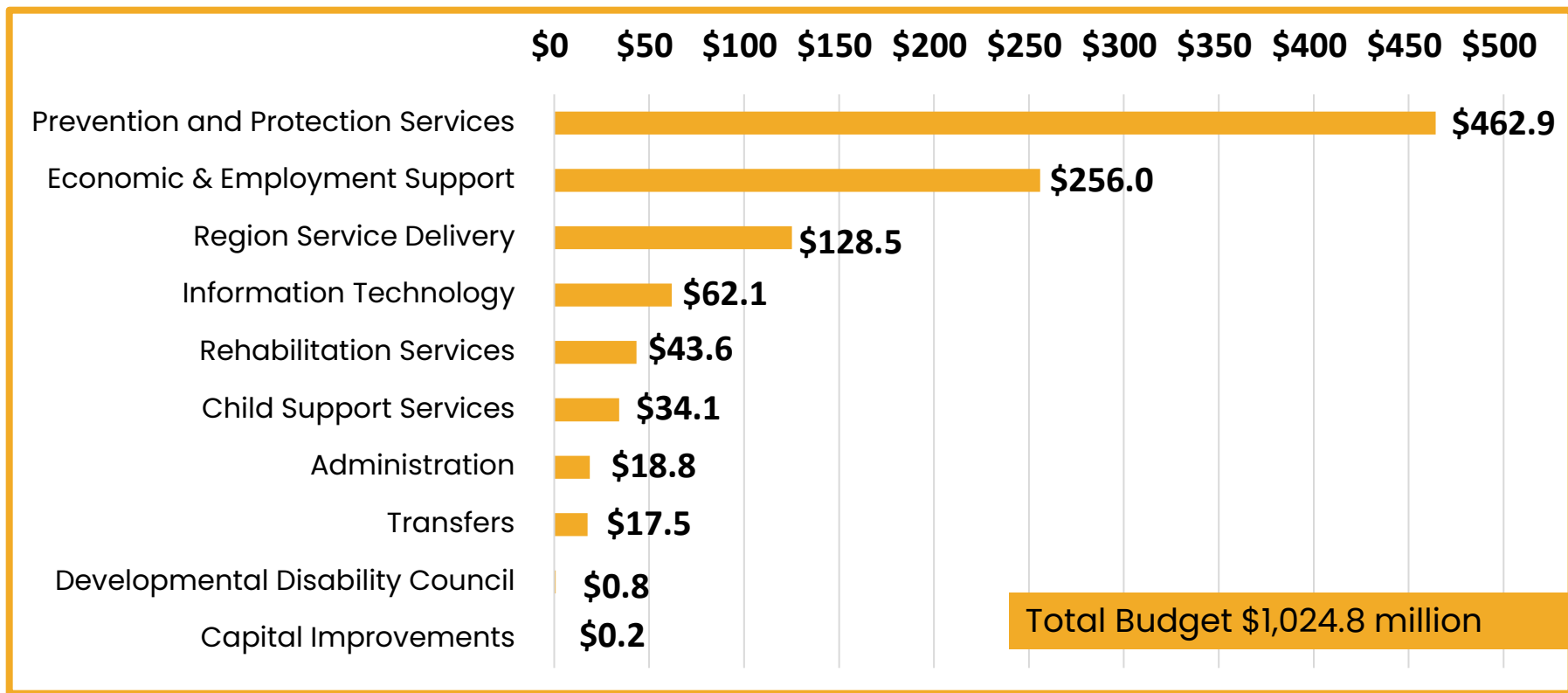
Total Budget **FY 2026**
\$1,024.8

Funding Sources

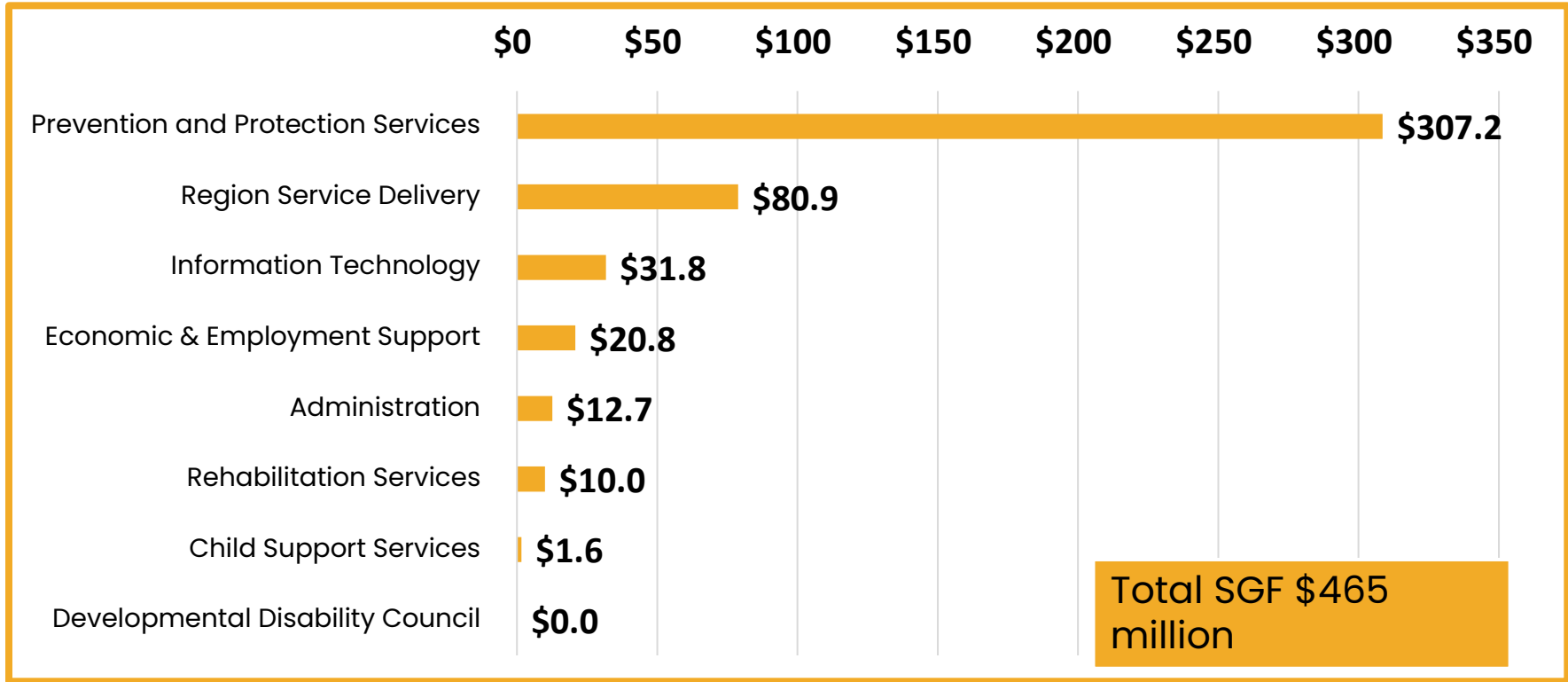
State General Fund	\$465.0
Children's Initiative Fund	\$5.0
Other State Funds	\$19.2
Federal Funds	\$535.4
Enterprise Funds	\$0.1
Total Funding	\$1,024.8



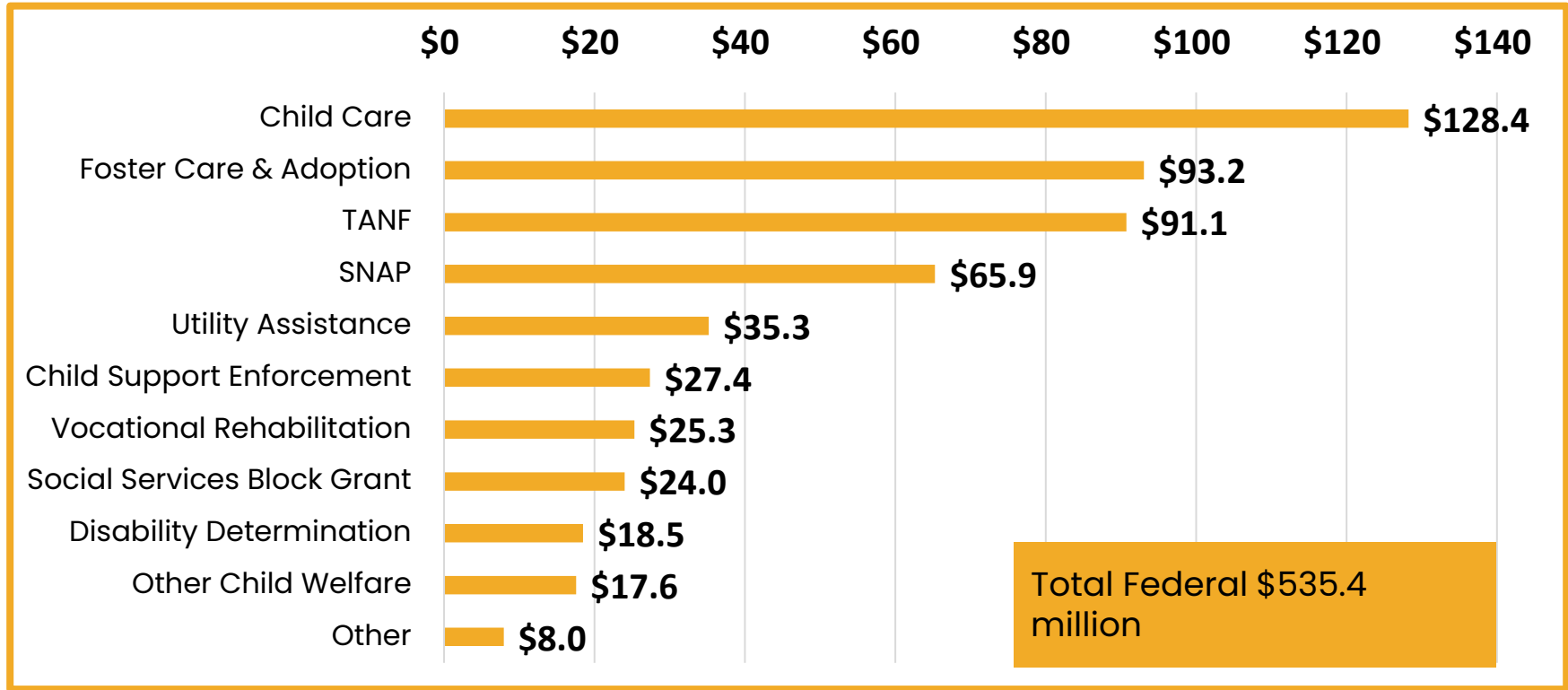
FY 2026 Approved Budget by Program (MILLIONS)



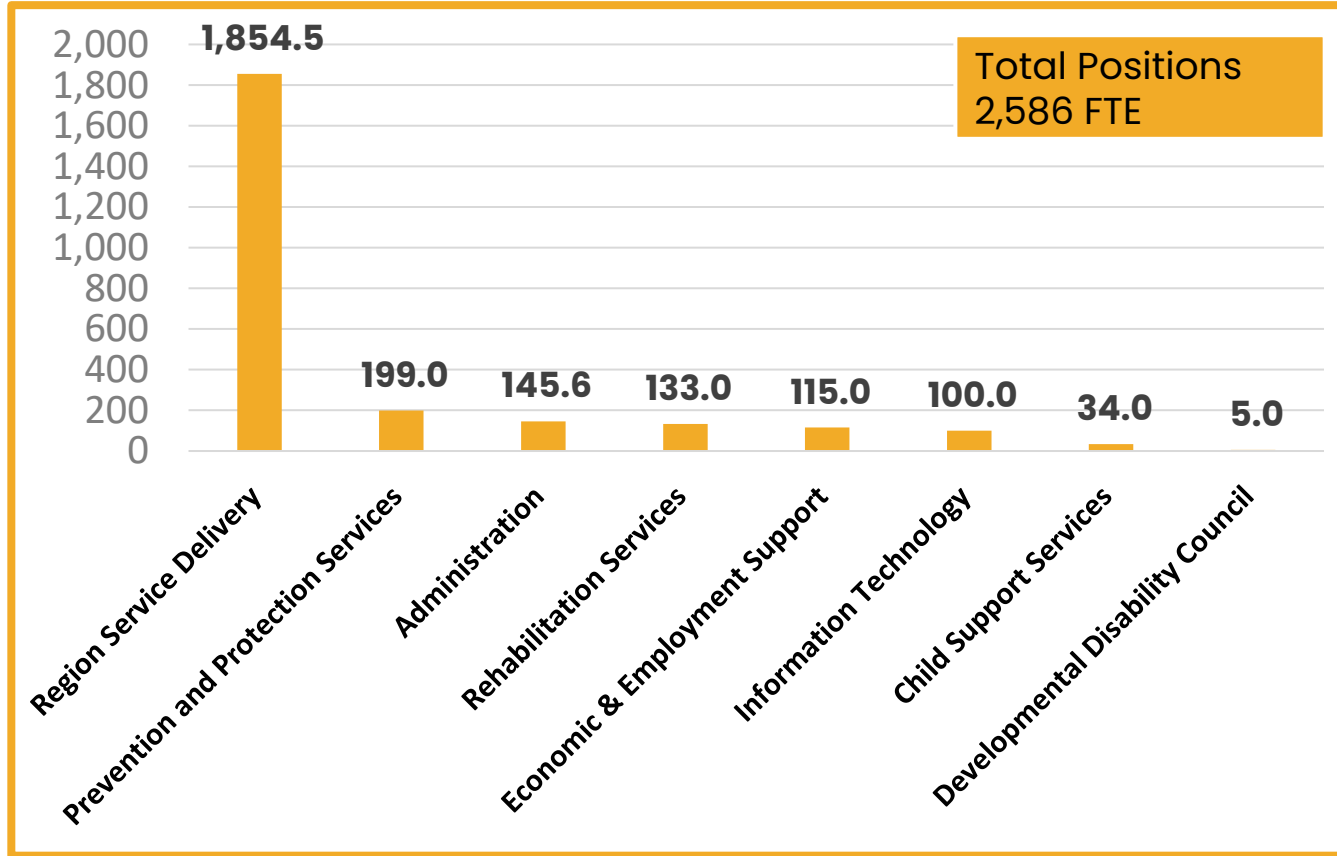
FY 2026 Approved SGF By Program (MILLIONS)



FY 2026 Approved Federal Funds (MILLIONS)



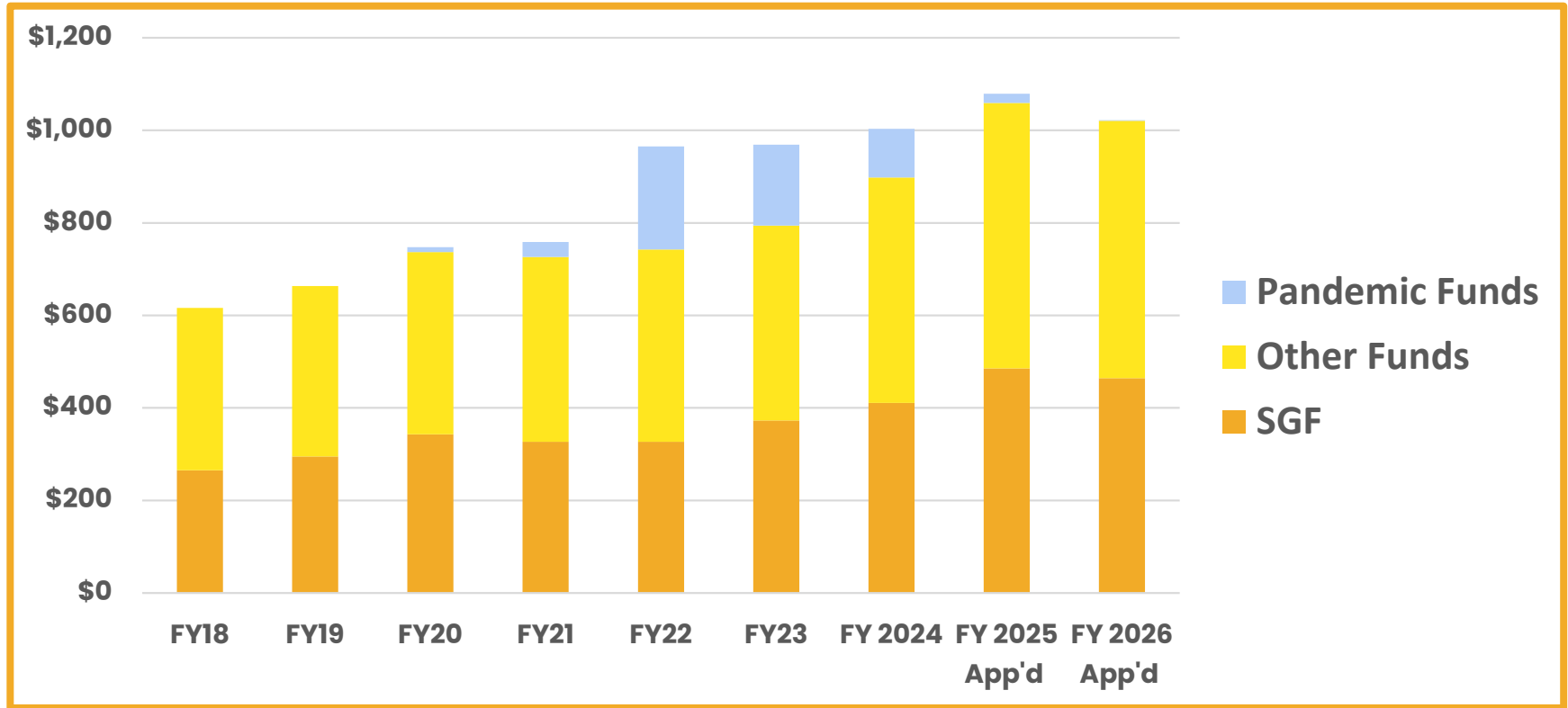
FY 2026 Approved Positions



These are total authorized positions. About 400 are unfilled at any given time. Of the 400, part are vacant because of the normal time for recruitment and hiring, and the other part because the agency does not have adequate funds to fill every position and has to leave them vacant.

DCF Budget

FY 2018 – FY 2026



FY 2026 Budget Adjustments

(in millions)



	All Funds	SGF
Submitted Base Budget	\$1,032.9	\$470.3
Governor's Enhancements Included	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	(2.3)	(2.3)
Pay Plan	5.3	3.1
Total Adjustments to Base Budget	(\$8.1)	(\$5.2)
Total DCF Approved Budget	\$1,024.8	\$465.0

Notes: -The total includes transfers to other state agencies

- The vacant position reduction will not be determined until June 2026.

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 (GILA)



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.
- Continues funding previously provided by Department of Education.
- 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.
- The funding helps cover SparkWheels operating costs.



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.

2026 Consensus Caseload Adjustments

Fall 2024 Consensus Caseload Estimate



This table represent the adjustments from the Fall 2024 consensus caseload estimate that were included in the appropriation bill. The Spring 2026 adjustments were not in the 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)	

1.5% Legislative Cut to SGF

Listing of items reduced for FY2026

Reduction	All Funds	SGF	Description
Reduce Travel Expense	(47,913)	(20,200)	The travel budget will be reduced for each division. This reduction may mean that fewer staff traveling for conferences and meetings. All travel for client visits remains.
Eliminate Desk phones and/or voice mail for staff with work cellphones	(50,000)	(50,000)	Desk phone voice mail will end for employees who have a mobile phone and transfer desk phone calls to the cell phone.
Eliminate Conference Room Phones	(8,000)	(8,000)	Phone jacks in offices that are not using a phone or computer connection will be deactivated.
Reduce Outside Legal Fees	(103,309)	(103,309)	The DCF Legal Department has historically underspent this line item. There should be no impact on the legal department or functions of the office.

1.5% Legislative Cut to SGF

Listing of items reduced for FY2026 Continued

Reduction	All Funds	SGF	Description
Reduce Post Adoption Supports (OOE Contract)	(503,601)	(503,601)	Provides individualized post adoption supports including training for adoptive parents, respite care, and Trust-Based Relational Intervention sessions through in-home therapy. The budget for SFY26 will be \$496,399.
Family Preservation	(806,614)	(806,614)	The reduction will bring spending closer to historic levels. The referrals for all DCF regions except Wichita will remain the same as in SFY25. Wichita will have a referral decrease of 131. None of the DCF regions or Family Preservation providers will experience the need to decrease spending. The SFY26 budget will be \$12.2 million All Funds and \$3.9 million SGF.
Reduce Hope Ranch (OOE Contract)	(200,000)	(200,000)	Hope Ranch provides services to female victims of human trafficking. The reduction will allow for continued direct services for the clients served annually by Hope Ranch. The Hope Ranch contract for SFY26 will be \$100,000.

1.5% Legislative Cut to SGF

Listing of items reduced for FY2026 Continued

Reduction	All Funds	SGF	Description
We Kan Drive (OOE Contract)	(406,982)	(406,982)	The We Kan Drive Program helps youth in foster care secure auto insurance, assistance with obtaining a driver's license and drivers education courses. The change in the SFY26 contract will reduce spending to the FY24 and FY25 level. The We Kan Drive contract for SFY26 will be \$850,000.
Toiletries Grant (OOE Contract)	(200,000)	(200,000)	Giving the Basics, Inc. works with low-income families across the state to improve the health, wellness and academic success by providing free essential hygiene products directly to school districts for distribution to students. The reduction will bring the grant in alignment with the amount spent in FY25. The budget for SFY26 will be \$1.6 million SGF.
Total	(2,326,419)	(2,298,706)	

FY 2026 Pay Plan

- The FY 2026 pay plan totals \$5,325,243 all funds and \$3,138,131 SGF.
- 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

Pending Adjustment

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.

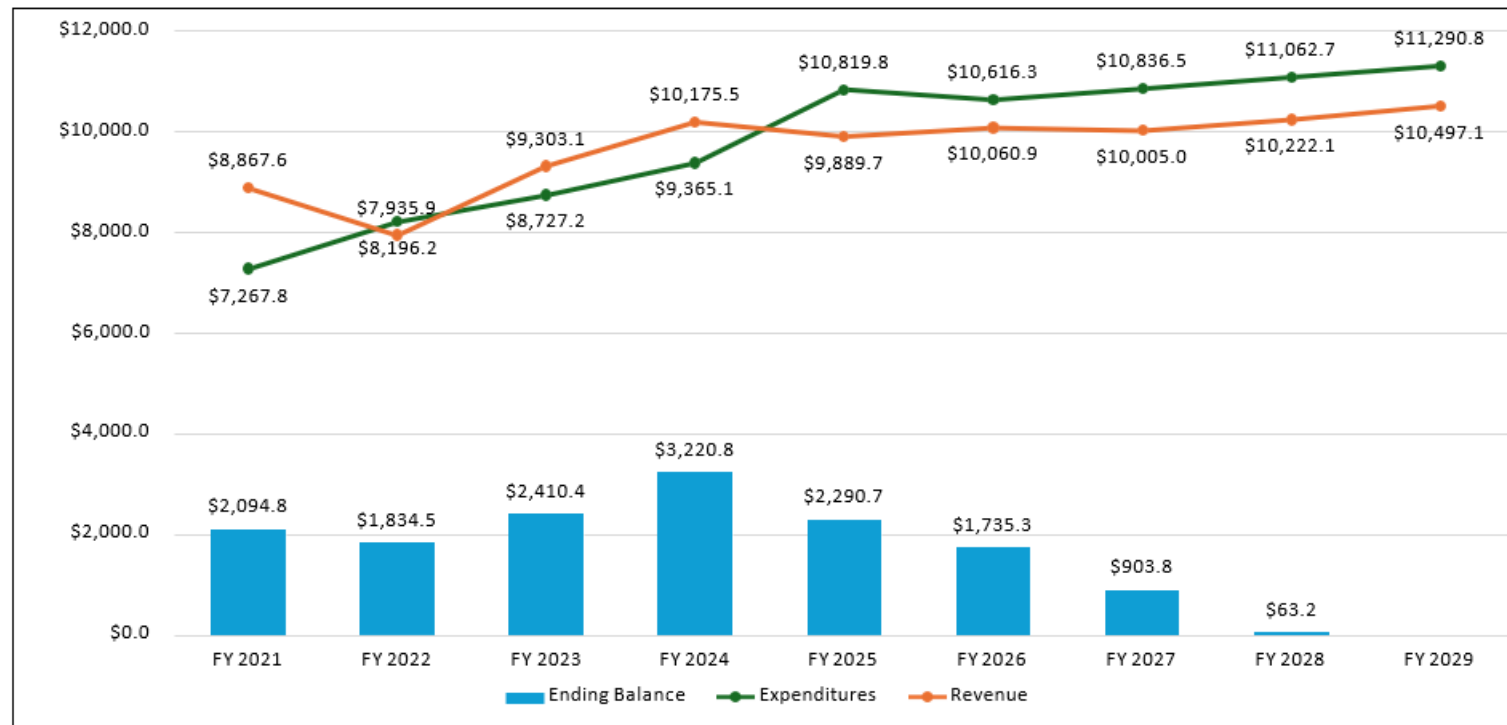
Fiscal Year 2027 & Future



- The State has been in great financial position the past several years.
 - State revenues have increased
 - Federal funding increased with significant money tied to the pandemic
 - Many critical programs and services were able to be funded and expanded
 - Strong ending balances were maintained
 - Kansas ended FY 2025 with total tax collections of \$1.06 billion. Up 3.2% from 2024.
- However, with the most recent budget, the Governor has pointed out that state funds will be in the red by 2029.
 - The budget created by the Legislature now spends hundreds of millions more than estimated revenues for the foreseeable future
 - Keeping Kansas on the path of fiscal stability is going to require a lot of discipline this next year.
- For FY 2027, state agencies will be trying to submit a budget with little to no growth in state funds from the current year.
- Federal funding, which accounts for over half of DCF's funds, also looks to be decreasing.
 - The Reconciliation Bill & the Proposed FFY26 President's Budget cuts millions from the DCF budget.

State General Fund Estimate

KLRD Estimates through FY2029



Includes Approved Legislation, Veto Overrides, & Vetoes as of April 11, 2025
Dollars in millions



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 before Aug. 8.

DCF.Budget@ks.gov

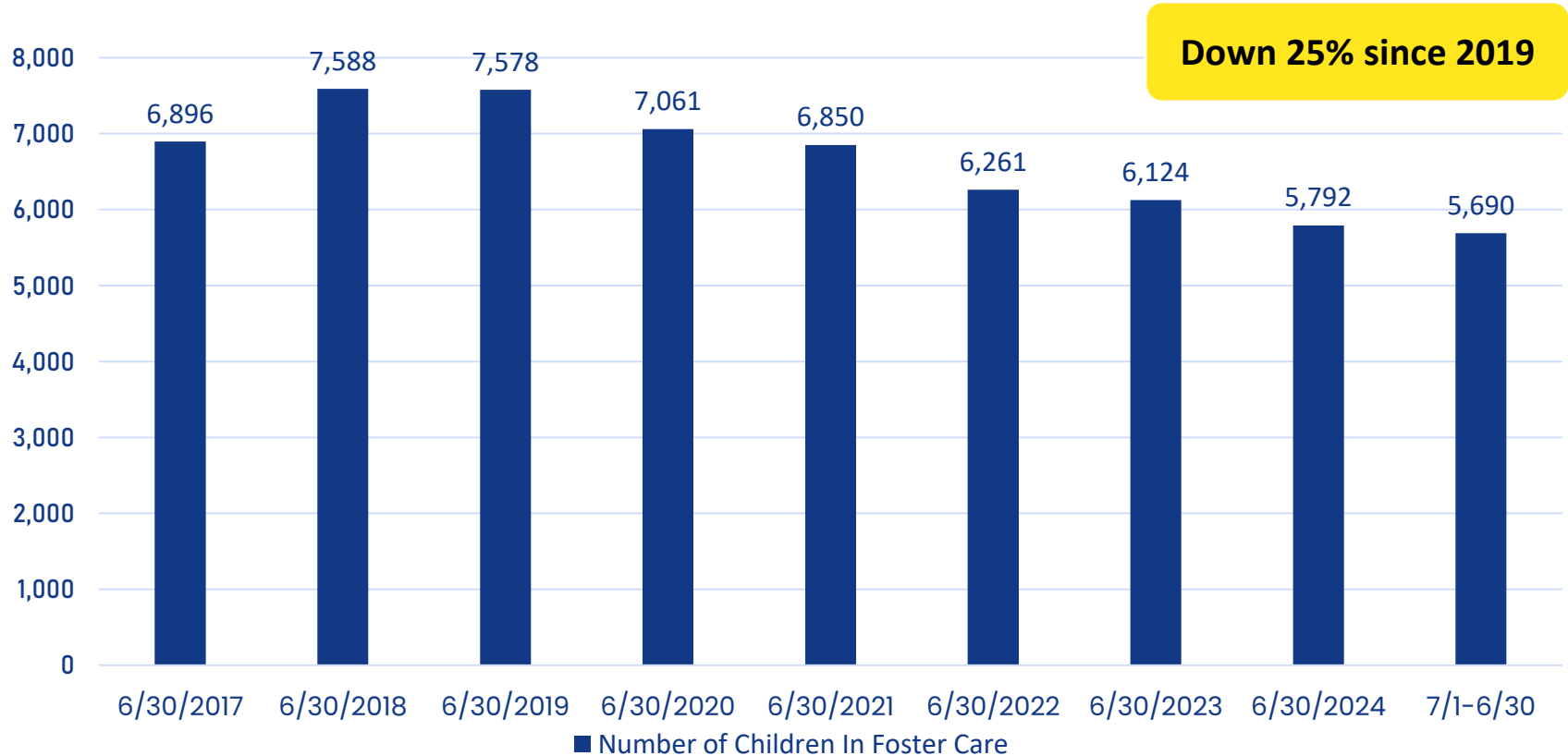
Program Updates



Deputy Secretary Tanya Keys



Number of Children in Foster Care



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**.

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

As of July 1, there are 96 Therapeutic Family Foster Homes, 38 of which provide respite care only.

- At least one home available in each DCF Region
- Mockingbird Model launch of first two family constellations scheduled in May.
- Cornerstones of Care has been able to provide 2,318 nights of respite care to avoid the need for entering foster care.
- In-Home Specialists have worked with 35 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.
- 30 respite caregivers successfully ended the need for respite care and the children were able to return safely home.

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 18 young people** experiencing SOUL legal permanency

- A 16 year-old from Republic County established the first SOUL family in the state, and therefore, the country!
- 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

Salina Area Partnership in Action

One month ago, the partnership with the goal to build a stronger community by ensuring resources are being shared and utilized to their fullest potential launched!

Working jointly with the Salina Area United Way and DCF, the group share:

- Information about new and existing initiatives
- Build relationships
- Strengthen collaboration

The partnership meets quarterly in person and engage virtually as needed on a shared Microsoft Teams channel that hosts resources and information members will find valuable and informative.



Holidays and Weekend Response

On July 1, 2025, DCF began initiating contact with families every day of the week including Saturdays, Sundays and holidays when there is a report from a law enforcement officer about a child in a family who might be a victim of abuse or neglect.

- DCF responds within 24 hours by initiating contact of individuals named and responding back to the referring law enforcement agency.
- From July 1 to 17, 211 reports have been received.
- Northwest region with 14 and four from Salina Police Department.

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.

Questions?

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



stakeholder.dcf.ks.gov

Thank You For Joining Us

