



ADOPTION PROVISIONAL REPORT

Department of Children and Families

Office of Child Welfare

February 15, 2017

Mike Carroll

Secretary

Rick Scott

Governor

Table of Contents

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Purpose..... | 3 |
| Maintenance Adoption Subsidy..... | 4 |
| Northwest Region..... | 4 |
| Northeast Region | 4 |
| Central Region..... | 5 |
| Suncoast Region..... | 5 |
| Southeast Region..... | 6 |
| Southern Region..... | 6 |
| Statewide..... | 7 |
| Year-End Projections..... | 8 |
| Conclusions..... | 9 |

Purpose

Section 409.166, Florida Statutes, describes the intent to protect and promote the right of every child to have the stability and security of a permanent family, especially when that child cannot safely return to his/her birth parents due to abuse, abandonment, or neglect. Maintenance adoption subsidies (MAS) and medical assistance enable families to consider adoption of special needs children who have been traumatized by abuse, abandonment, or neglect.

Proviso Language for line item 342A in the 2016 General Appropriations Act (Chapter 2016-66, Laws of Florida) required the Department of Children and Families (Department) to provide the number of adoptions finalized, the average maintenance adoption subsidy amounts, the number of adoptions receiving an enhanced subsidy, and the average enhanced subsidy amounts by Community-Based Care (CBC) Lead Agencies for adoptions that occurred from July 1, 2016 through January 31, 2017. The proviso language also required the Department to provide a year-end projection of the total funding need for MAS based on the aforementioned data.

Documentation in the Florida Safe Families Network (FSFN), the statewide automated child welfare information system, could take up to 30 days after the adoption finalization, due to the delays in receiving finalization orders from the judicial system. In an effort to ensure that accurate information is provided timely, this report captures adoption finalizations from July 1, 2016 through November 30, 2016. An addendum report will be provided at a later date that will capture the adoptions that occurred from December 1, 2016 through January 31, 2017.

MAS payments are negotiated for every child adopted who meets the definition of “special needs” outlined in section 409.166, Florida Statutes. Once an agreement on the amount of the MAS is reached, all parties sign an Adoption Assistance Agreement outlining the amount of subsidy that the family will receive. Per section 65C-16.013(7), Florida Administrative Code, MAS negotiations must begin at \$417.00. If the family requests an MAS amount higher than the current Statewide Foster Care Board Payment that includes the annual cost of care living increase (\$527.36), approval of the Department’s regional managing director or designee is required. All MAS amounts above the Statewide Foster Care Board Payment of \$527.26 are considered to be enhanced subsidies. These subsidies may be provided to children who have behavioral, medical, or therapeutic concerns that may cause a higher level of care from the adoptive parents.

Maintenance Adoption Subsidy

(In the charts that follow, the “Average Enhanced Subsidy Amount” represents the total average maintenance adoption subsidy payment that the family would receive.)

Northwest

Region

Maintenance Adoption Subsidy Amount for Children Adopted Between
7/1/2016- 11/30/2016
Region: Northwest

| CBC | Number of Adoptions | Average Subsidy Amount | Number of Adoptions with Enhanced Subsidy | Average Enhanced Subsidy Amount |
|------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| Big Bend CBC | 85 | \$451.82 | 3 | \$1,851.67 |
| Families First Network | 79 | \$509.28 | 4 | \$2,239.60 |
| Northwest Region Total | 164 | \$479.50 | 7 | \$2,073.34 |

Source: OCWDRU Data Request #1681

The chart above depicts that the Northwest Region finalized a total of 164 adoptions between July 1, 2016 and November 30, 2016. Of the 164 finalized adoptions, seven children received an enhanced subsidy. The average enhanced adoption subsidy of \$2,073.34 was approximately 23 percent above the region’s average adoption subsidy of \$479.50.

Northeast Region

Maintenance Adoption Subsidy Amount for Children Adopted Between
7/1/2016- 11/30/2016
Region: Northeast

| CBC | Number of Adoptions | Average Subsidy Amount | Number of Adoptions with Enhanced Subsidy | Average Enhanced Subsidy Amount |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| Community Partnership for Children | 104 | \$484.41 | 16 | \$863.97 |
| Family Integrity Program | 11 | \$563.81 | 1 | \$1,667.22 |
| Family Support Services of North Fla | 99 | \$410.27 | 8 | \$873.07 |
| Kids First of Florida, Inc. | 39 | \$415.93 | 0 | \$0.00 |
| Partnership for Strong Families | 77 | \$422.22 | 3 | \$1,984.85 |
| Northeast Region Total | 330 | \$442.21 | 28 | \$1,015.35 |

Source: OCWDRU Data Request #1681

The Northeast Region’s five CBC Lead Agencies finalized 330 adoptions between July 1, 2016 and November 30, 2016. The chart above illustrates that of the 330 adoptions finalized, 28 of these children received an enhanced subsidy amount. The average enhanced adoption subsidy of \$1,015.35 was approximately 44 percent above the region’s average adoption subsidy of \$442.21.

Central Region

Maintenance Adoption Subsidy Amount for Children Adopted Between
7/1/2016- 11/30/2016
Region: Central

| CBC | Number of Adoptions | Average Subsidy Amount | Number of Adoptions with Enhanced Subsidy | Average Enhanced Subsidy Amount |
|--|---------------------|------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| Brevard Family Partnership | 25 | \$595.32 | 3 | \$1,816.00 |
| Community Based Care of Central Fla | 89 | \$432.24 | 2 | \$1,000.00 |
| Community Based Care of Central Fla (Seminole) | 31 | \$422.56 | 0 | \$0.00 |
| Heartland for Children | 46 | \$401.26 | 1 | \$862.00 |
| Kids Central, Inc. | 57 | \$441.42 | 1 | \$1,338.40 |
| Central Region Total | 248 | \$443.83 | 7 | \$1,378.34 |

Source: OCWDRU Data Request #1681

The Central Region finalized 248 adoptions during the specified time period, and seven of those adoptions received an enhanced subsidy amount. The region's average enhanced subsidy amount was \$1,378.34, which was 32 percent higher than the region's average subsidy amount of \$443.83.

Suncoast Region

Maintenance Adoption Subsidy Amount for Children Adopted Between
7/1/2016- 11/30/2016
Region: Suncoast

| CBC | Number of Adoptions | Average Subsidy Amount | Number of Adoptions with Enhanced Subsidy | Average Enhanced Subsidy Amount |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| Childrens Network of SW Florida | 51 | \$469.45 | 5 | \$934.40 |
| Eckerd Community Alternatives | 137 | \$511.47 | 14 | \$1,404.99 |
| Eckerd Community Hillsborough | 142 | \$489.00 | 13 | \$1,154.94 |
| Sarasota Y/Safe Children Coalition | 56 | \$426.79 | 2 | \$950.00 |
| Suncoast Region Total | 386 | \$485.37 | 34 | \$1,213.41 |

Source: OCWDRU Data Request #1681

As represented in the chart above, the CBC Lead Agencies in the Suncoast Region finalized a total of 386 adoptions from July 1, 2016 through November 30, 2016, with an average subsidy of \$485.37. Of the total number of adoptions, 9 percent of these adoptions (34 children) resulted in an enhanced adoption subsidy, with the average enhanced subsidy totaling \$1,213.41.

Southeast Region

Maintenance Adoption Subsidy Amount for Children Adopted Between
7/1/2016- 11/30/2016
Region: Southeast

| CBC | Number of Adoptions | Average Subsidy Amount | Number of Adoptions with Enhanced Subsidy | Average Enhanced Subsidy Amount |
|------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| ChildNet-Broward | 93 | \$507.99 | 7 | \$1,624.56 |
| ChildNet-Palm Beach | 88 | \$423.39 | 0 | \$0.00 |
| Devereux CBC | 68 | \$412.33 | 0 | \$0.00 |
| Southeast Region Total | 249 | \$451.97 | 7 | \$1,624.56 |

Source: OCWDRU Data Request #1681

In the Southeast Region, seven of the 249 adoptions finalized during the reporting period received an enhanced subsidy. The average enhanced subsidy amount for the region was \$1,624.56, which is 28% above the average subsidy amount of \$451.97.

Southern Region

Maintenance Adoption Subsidy Amount for Children Adopted Between
7/1/2016- 11/30/2016
Region: Southern

| CBC | Number of Adoptions | Average Subsidy Amount | Number of Adoptions with Enhanced Subsidy | Average Enhanced Subsidy Amount |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| Our Kids of Miami-Dade/Monroe, Inc | 159 | \$472.23 | 14 | \$932.40 |
| Southern Region Total | 159 | \$472.23 | 14 | \$932.40 |

Source: OCWDRU Data Request #1681

The chart above illustrates that the Southern Region completed 159 adoptions during the reporting period. Fourteen of the 159 adoptions received an enhanced subsidy with an average enhanced subsidy amount of \$932.40. The region's average enhanced adoption subsidy was approximately 51 percent above the average adoption subsidy amount of \$472.23.

Statewide

Maintenance Adoption Subsidy Amount for Children Adopted Between 7/1/2016- 11/30/2016 Statewide

| CBC | Number of Adoptions | Average Subsidy Amount | Number of Adoptions with Enhanced Subsidy | Average Enhanced Subsidy Amount |
|--|---------------------|------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| Big Bend CBC | 85 | \$451.82 | 3 | \$1,851.67 |
| Brevard Family Partnership | 25 | \$595.32 | 3 | \$1,816.00 |
| ChildNet-Broward | 93 | \$507.99 | 7 | \$1,624.56 |
| ChildNet-Palm Beach | 88 | \$423.39 | 0 | \$0.00 |
| Childrens Network of SW Florida | 51 | \$469.45 | 5 | \$934.40 |
| Community Based Care of Central Fla | 89 | \$432.24 | 2 | \$1,000.00 |
| Community Based Care of Central Fla (Seminole) | 31 | \$422.56 | 0 | \$0.00 |
| Community Partnership for Children | 104 | \$484.41 | 16 | \$863.97 |
| Devereux CBC | 68 | \$412.33 | 0 | \$0.00 |
| Eckerd Community Alternatives | 137 | \$511.47 | 14 | \$1,404.99 |
| Eckerd Community Hillsborough | 142 | \$489.00 | 13 | \$1,154.94 |
| Families First Network | 79 | \$509.28 | 4 | \$2,239.60 |
| Family Integrity Program | 11 | \$563.81 | 1 | \$1,667.22 |
| Family Support Services of North Fla | 99 | \$410.27 | 8 | \$873.07 |
| Heartland for Children | 46 | \$401.26 | 1 | \$862.00 |
| Kids Central, Inc. | 57 | \$441.42 | 1 | \$1,338.40 |
| Kids First of Florida, Inc. | 39 | \$415.93 | 0 | \$0.00 |
| Our Kids of Miami-Dade/Monroe, Inc | 159 | \$472.23 | 14 | \$932.40 |
| Partnership for Strong Families | 77 | \$422.22 | 3 | \$1,984.85 |
| Sarasota Y/Safe Children Coalition | 56 | \$426.79 | 2 | \$950.00 |
| Statewide | 1,536 | \$461.99 | 97 | \$1,219.31 |

Source: OCWDRU Data Request #1681

The chart above provides a statewide listing of the total number of adoptions, average subsidy amount, the number of enhanced subsidies, and the average enhanced subsidy amount for adoptions from July 1, 2016 through November 30, 2016. For that time period, a total of 1,536 adoptions were finalized statewide. Of these adoptions, 6% (or 97) resulted in enhanced subsidies being offered to the families at a statewide average of \$1,219.31.

Year-End Projections

State of Florida, Department of Children and Families (DCF)
Fiscal Year 2016/2017 Mid-Year MAS Allocations, DCF Office of
CBC/ME Financial Accountability

| Child Welfare Lead Agency (CBC) | Current MAS Budget Allocation in Schedule of Funds (09/08/2016) | Total Projected MAS Expenditures from CBCs in Jan 2017 | Difference between MAS in Current Schedule of Funds and Total Projected MAS Expenditures |
|--|---|--|--|
| Big Bend CBC | \$8,087,338 | \$8,231,166 | (\$143,828) |
| Brevard Family Partnership | \$3,743,945 | \$3,819,678 | (\$75,733) |
| CBC of Central Florida | \$11,611,188 | \$11,448,023 | \$163,165 |
| ChildNet-Broward | \$10,852,230 | \$11,402,657 | (\$550,427) |
| ChildNet-Palm Beach | \$9,667,994 | \$9,641,544 | \$26,450 |
| Children's Network of SW Fla | \$6,831,811 | \$7,317,255 | (\$485,444) |
| Community Partnership for Children | \$8,791,950 | \$9,060,022 | (\$268,072) |
| Devereux CBC | \$5,277,697 | \$5,931,369 | (\$653,672) |
| Eckerd-Hillsborough | \$18,169,169 | \$18,276,287 | (\$107,118) |
| Eckerd-Pasco/Pinellas | \$19,811,894 | \$19,519,345 | \$292,549 |
| Families First Network | \$10,506,326 | \$11,078,400 | (\$572,074) |
| Family Support Services of N Fla | \$17,214,763 | \$16,801,336 | \$413,427 |
| Heartland for Children | \$8,859,225 | \$8,341,953 | \$517,272 |
| Kids Central | \$8,274,206 | \$8,120,539 | \$153,667 |
| Kids First of Florida | \$1,791,937 | \$1,851,464 | (\$59,527) |
| Our Kids of Miami-Dade & Monroe | \$20,533,933 | \$20,634,027 | (\$100,094) |
| Partnership for Strong Families | \$9,553,529 | \$9,580,606 | (\$27,077) |
| Sarasota Family YMCA | \$7,324,659 | \$7,267,092 | \$57,567 |
| St Johns County - Family Integrity Program | \$1,176,027 | \$1,272,628 | (\$96,601) |
| Total Allocated MAS in CBC Sch of Funds | \$188,079,821 | \$189,595,391 | (\$1,515,570) |
| Total MAS unallocated (Jan 2017) | \$3,000,002 | | |
| Total MAS Budget for FY16/17 | \$191,079,823 | | |

The Department has seen a growth in adoption finalizations over the past year, which has resulted in more families receiving a maintenance adoption subsidy. Each year, the Department requests that the CBCs provide a year-end projection of the amount of funding needed to support MAS payments until the end of the fiscal year. The chart above reflects the SFY 2016-2017 CBC MAS end of year projections as of January 2017. The chart also indicates that seven of the 19 Lead CBC Agencies' projections are currently within their anticipated allocations. Lastly, the chart reflects \$3 million in unallocated MAS funds that the Department will use in performing the reconciliation and reallocation requirements referenced below.

Additional Proviso Language for line item 342A in the 2016 General Appropriations Act (Chapter 2016-66, Laws of Florida) directed:

By April 30, 2017, the department shall perform a reconciliation of the funding appropriated and the projected expenditures for adoption assistance subsidies for each lead agency. Any projected year-end surplus of funding shall, if necessary, be re-allocated to lead agencies that are projecting a year-end deficit. Any unexpended funds, as determined by a reconciliation of the fiscal year-end actual expenditures, shall revert June 30, 2017.

The Department will comply with this requirement by requesting updated MAS projections in March and reallocating MAS funds as needed.

The recent implementation of the Adoption Benefits Program for State and Other Qualifying Employees found in section 409.1664, Florida Statutes, and the Adoption Incentive Program located in section 409.1662, Florida Statutes, are potential factors that may contribute to the continued rise in the total number of adoptions and the number of families adopting from the foster care system.

Conclusions

MAS has proven to be an important support in the adoption of foster children with special needs. Subsidies have enabled a new population of families to adopt children with special needs, especially foster parents and relative caregivers who develop a commitment and nurturing relationship with these children. As a result, thousands of children each year are being nurtured by permanent adoptive families in Florida's communities rather than remaining in foster care.