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Legislative Budget and Audit Committee

November 16, 2005

The Legislative Budget and Audit Committee is concerned about the timing of the release of the audit on the Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Family and Youth Services, the Division of Juvenile Justice, and the Office of the Commissioner.

We recognize that the combination of three factors resulted in an untimely release of the audit report. These factors are: 1) the audit request itself, which identified activities as early as FY 98 that were to be reviewed; 2) the delay in starting the audit, and; 3) the very large scale of the audit. While the on-going discussions and interim communications between the audit staff and the agency has allowed the agency to consider the initial findings of the audit to make corrective action, the timing of the final audit report limits its usefulness to the legislature and the public.

As illustrated in the Department's response (starting on page 127) DHSS has already initiated, and, in some cases completed, the corrective actions recommended in the report.

The Committee also wishes to note that the former commissioner recognizes that the January 2001 trip discussed in detail in the audit report is a blur of state and personal business. As a result, the commissioner intends to reimburse the state for the costs associated with that trip. This action is consistent with the previous action of taking personal leave for most of that trip to avoid any questions about using state resources for personal business.

The Committee will work with the auditor to explore avenues for finalizing audits in a timelier manner.

Gene Therriault

Senator Therriault, Chairman
Legislative Budget & Audit Committee

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July 1, 2005

Members of the Legislative Budget
and Audit Committee:

In accordance with the provisions of Title 24 of the Alaska Statutes, the attached report is submitted for your review.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
DIVISION OF FAMILY AND YOUTH SERVICES,
DIVISION OF JUVENILE JUSTICE, AND
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER
SELECTED MANAGEMENT ISSUES

April 11, 2005

Audit Control Number

06-30020-05

This report addresses management issues related to the Division of Family and Youth Services (DFYS), Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ), and Office of the Commissioner. In particular, we reviewed both DFYS' and DJJ's management practices, employee turnover and vacancy, and application of personnel rules. In DFYS we reviewed: licensure of social workers, positions at its central office, internal child-fatality reviews conducted when the child was in state custody at the time of death or had received services from DFYS, and supervision and management of field offices. Areas specific to DJJ included: intake and probation services, reported juvenile crime statistics, readiness of juvenile probation officers to physically restrain and arrest juvenile offenders, and consistency of employee discipline for child abuse. Additionally, we reviewed travel by senior management.

The audit was conducted in accordance with generally accepted government audit standards. Fieldwork procedures utilized in the course of developing the findings and conclusions presented in this report are discussed in the Objectives, Scope, and Methodology.

Pat Davidson, CPA
Legislative Auditor

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OBJECTIVES, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

In accordance with Title 24 of the Alaska Statutes and a special request by the Legislative Budget and Audit Committee, we have conducted an audit of the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS). The audit was to address various management issues related to the Division of Family and Youth Services (DFYS), now the Office of Children's Services (OCS); the Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ); and the Office of the Commissioner.

Objectives

The objectives of the audit were:

- To conduct a confidential survey of current and former DFYS and DJJ employees to determine the relationship between management practices and employee turnover
- To determine if the turnover and vacancy of certain DFYS and DJJ positions has been high
- To obtain stakeholders' perspective on DFYS and DJJ management
- To determine if the administration's policy shift to licensed social workers was realistic and practical in Alaska
- To determine if personnel rules were fairly applied to DFYS and DJJ staff
- To determine if the administrative position upgrades in DFYS' central office were reasonable and necessary
- To determine the adequacy of DFYS' internal child-fatality reviews of policies and procedures when the child was in state custody at the time of death or had received services from DFYS
- To determine the adequacy of supervision and management of DFYS field offices
- To determine whether DJJ's intake and probation services were provided in accordance with laws, regulations, and policies
- To determine if juvenile crime statistics reported to the legislature were reasonable
- To determine whether DJJ probation officers were willing and able to physically restrain and arrest juvenile offenders
- To determine if employee discipline for client abuse was conducted and resolved in a consistent manner in accordance with laws, regulations, and policies
- To determine whether travel by the various DHSS commissioners and their staff and by senior management in DFYS and DJJ was in accordance with laws, regulations, and policies

Scope and methodology

Our audit focused on five categories as follows:

1. DFYS and DJJ personnel management issues
2. DFYS field office management
3. DJJ probation services
4. DJJ employee discipline
5. Management travel

A detailed scope and methodology for each of the five categories is discussed in detail below. Additionally, we reviewed the following materials as either background materials or to add to our overall understanding of the five audit categories. Specifically, we reviewed:

- Alaska Statutes, regulations, and *Alaska Rules of Court*
- Statewide, departmental, and divisional policies and procedures
- Financial information from the State's accounting system
- Prior Alaska Division of Legislative Audit reports
- Various reports from the U.S. General Accountability Office, Child Welfare League of America, and other federal, national, and nonprofit organizations
- Office of the Governor (Tony Knowles), *Report of the Governor's Commission on Child Protection,* October 1, 2002
- Commission on Privatization and Delivery of Government Services, *Final Report,* January 2000, and the Subcommittee Report on the Department of Health and Social Services, November 24, 1999, pp. 21-32

DFYS AND DJJ PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT ISSUES

Employee survey

Current and former employees of DFYS and DJJ were asked to participate in a confidential survey in the summer of 2003.

The survey was web-based, meaning the employee was sent an email with a personalized link to the actual survey located on a secure web server. Current and former employees without readily accessible email addresses were mailed information on how to participate in the survey. Responses were tabulated with the use of *Perseus SurveySolutions* software.

The objective of the survey was to gather observations and opinions on various issues including staff turnover, licensing of social workers, application of personnel rules, and management practices. Former employees were surveyed for the reasons they left the division, e.g., whether for personal, work-related, advancement, compensation, or management reasons. Several questions also addressed exit interviews.

The survey consisted generally of multiple-choice questions and the opportunity to provide comments. Because of the diverse nature of DFYS and DJJ employees, some questions were addressed solely to social workers, children's services specialists, juvenile probation officers, or youth counselors. In addition, rural employees[1] were questioned separately about operations in their remote office locations.

[1] Rural employees are those whose offices are located other than in Juneau, Anchorage, Palmer, or Fairbanks.

Follow-up emails and phone calls were made to those individuals who had indicated they wished to provide additional input regarding the issues addressed in the survey. A total of 1,635 current and former employees were surveyed. Responses were received from 859 individuals, an overall response rate of 53%. Exhibit 1 illustrates the type and number of respondents.

Exhibit 1

Summary of Survey Population			
	Number Surveyed	**Number Responded**	**Percentage Responded**
DFYS Sample			
DFYS Current Employees			
Urban Social Workers	120	84	70%
Rural Social Workers	48	39	81%
Total Social Workers	168	123	73%
Urban CSS Workers	32	30	94%
Rural CSS Workers	14	9	64%
Total Children's Services Specialists	46	39	85%
Other Urban Workers	147	123	84%
Other Rural Workers	23	15	65%
Total Other Staff	170	138	81%
Total DFYS Current Employees	384	300	78%
Total DFYS Former Employees	604	202	33%
Total DFYS Employees	**988**	**502**	51%
DJJ Sample			
Juvenile Probation Officers	78	66	85%
Youth Counselors	235	131	56%
Other Staff	97	70	72%
Total DJJ Current Employees	410	267	65%
Total DJJ Former Employees	237	90	38%
Total DJJ Employees	**647**	**357**	55%
Total Employees	**1,635**	**859**	53%

Results are reported as a percentage of the employees who responded to the question. Not all respondents answered every question, and some questions were not applicable to certain individuals. Sometimes employees were asked to *"Check all of the suggestions that may apply"* or *"Pick no more than three"*; those percentages do not total 100%.

The survey results for each group of employees are found in Appendices A through D of this report.

Consideration of the survey results was included in other areas of the audit, where applicable.

Employee turnover and vacancy

To evaluate employee turnover and vacancy, we analyzed positions in the social worker and juvenile probation officer job class series for DFYS and DJJ. DHSS contracted for a workforce development study, and the related report was issued in July 2002.[2] The contractor provided us with the download of the State's payroll system as of February 9, 2001, which included historical information back to May 1990.

The data related to DHSS social worker and juvenile probation officer positions was extracted from the download of data received from the contractor. This extracted data was analyzed to determine the FY 00 turnover and vacancy rates in the specified job class series. The vacancy rate was defined as the number of days in the fiscal year that all positions were empty, divided by the total number of possible workdays for all positions. The turnover rate was defined as the number of times a vacant position became filled in the fiscal year, divided by the total number of positions.

In addition, DHSS provided Excel spreadsheets on the activity in the job class series during FY 03. This information was analyzed for accuracy and completeness through comparison of online data in the State's payroll system. The vacancy and turnover rates were calculated as defined above. This analysis was then compared with the FY 00 analysis to determine the change in turnover and vacancy rates of positions in the job class series.

We contacted private agencies that employ social workers, the National Association of Social Workers, the Child Welfare League of America, and the National Center for Juvenile Justice to obtain information on turnover and vacancy rates in the private sector and on a national level.

Stakeholders' perspective

We reviewed the federal *Alaska Child and Family Services Review, Final Report, September 2002*, which included comments from various stakeholders regarding DFYS. In addition, a sample of stakeholders, listed in the state's *Alaska Child and Family Services*

[2] *Department of Health and Social Services, Workforce Development Project, Final Report, July 2002*, was prepared by Information Insight, Inc.

Review Statewide Assessment, April 2002, was interviewed to obtain their current perspective on DFYS management.

Social worker licensure

We reviewed various materials regarding the licensure of social workers, including:

- Legislative committee minutes on HB 349 (Twentieth Alaska State Legislature) and HB 382 (Twenty-first Alaska State Legislature), which relate to social worker licensure
- Board of Social Work Examiners minutes from July 1, 2000, to December 31, 2001
- Job specifications for the social worker job class series
- Recruitment bulletins for these positions from Workplace Alaska
- The DHSS human resources office's study on the social worker job classification, dated December 26, 2001, and the *Legislative Budget and Audit Committee, Wage and Benefit Study, January 1999, Final Report,* prepared by KPMG, LLC
- The results of a survey of other states conducted by the Department of Administration (DOA), Division of Personnel, to identify states that require social worker licensure

We interviewed members of Alaska's Board of Social Work Examiners. Additionally, we analyzed other states' child protection websites to determine what, if any, licensing requirements had been established for social workers.

DFYS' social worker positions from FY 00 through FY 03[3] were analyzed to determine the number of positions reclassified to an unlicensed caseworker job class series[4] and to determine whether the employees in the social worker positions held a license.[5]

We conducted an analysis of the requirements for DFYS' Recruitment and Retention Stipend Program. Further, we examined the programmatic activity from the fall of 1998 through December 31, 2003, and the financial activity for FY 99 through FY 04. The information regarding the financial activity was obtained from the State's accounting system. The Alaska Family and Youth Services Training Academy's *2003 IV-E Stipend Program Report,* August 2003, was also included in our analysis.

Application of personnel rules

Listings of current and former DFYS and DJJ employees as of April 2003 were obtained from DHSS, Division of Administrative Services.[6] A judgmental sample of DFYS social workers and children's services specialists (five current and four former) and DJJ juvenile probation officers (four current and four former) was selected.

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[3] Data on social worker and children's services specialist positions as of the end of each of the fiscal years was extracted from the State's payroll system.
[4] Children's services specialist job class.
[5] This was done through a crosscheck of social security numbers in the license database of the Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development, Division of Occupational Licensing.
[6] This division is now called Finance and Management Services.

The State's payroll-system online information for each of the selected employees was reviewed for merit increases and promotions received**.** The employees' personnel files were obtained, and documentation relating to evaluations and merit increases was reviewed and compared with the payroll system data.

DFYS central office administrative positions

Our scope included positions in DFYS' central office beginning in FY 98. Additional positions and upgrades to positions in the central office were reviewed for the five-year period FY 99 through FY 03. We obtained information from the Office of the Governor, Office of Management and Budget on position authorization and upgrades as well as budgeted positions for DFYS.

Data relating to the positions was extracted from the State's payroll system. In addition, position descriptions were obtained and certain central office employees were interviewed. An understanding of DFYS' grant-monitoring process and procedures was obtained. On-site grant review reports were reviewed. As a result of the review of DFYS' grant monitoring, the scope was expanded to include the grant-monitoring process of DJJ.

DFYS internal reviews

The scope included nine fatalities of children who either were in state custody or had received DFYS services. Four child fatalities were reported in the Child Fatality Review Team's July 1999 monthly report, and five additional child fatalities were reported in DFYS' memorandums of concern dated October 31, 2000; January 4, 2001; and December 24, 2001.

Five of the child fatalities were selected for review. The related DFYS case files were examined and interviews of DFYS employees were conducted.

As a result of the review of these child fatalities, we also examined the Anchorage office's informal licensing action committee and its licensing unit's foster care license actions from July 2001 through June 2003. A judgmental sample of seven licensing actions was selected for review.

DFYS FIELD OFFICE MANAGEMENT

A portion of the audit request addressed various specific issues dealing with individual DFYS cases, particularly in the rural areas. After the audit request was approved by the Legislative Budget and Audit Committee, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau) conducted a review of the Alaska Child and Family Services program in June 2002. That review covered the core issues addressed in the audit request.

The federal review found that the State was not in substantial compliance with the seven safety, permanency and well-being outcomes under assessment. We satisfied ourselves with regard to the reliability of that review, and no additional work on procedural compliance of individual case files was considered necessary. The results of the federal review are contained in the *Alaska Child and Family Services Review, Final Report, September 2002.* An executive summary of the federal findings is presented in Appendix G of this report. The *Alaska Program Improvement Plan* was submitted by DHSS to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in July 2003.

Our scope included review of supervisory and management practices applied to DFYS field offices statewide. We interviewed DFYS central office, regional office, and field office staff. Policies and procedures relating to quality assurance, oversight and guidance of field offices, and caseload management were reviewed. The audit period covered was from July 2001 through March 2003.

DJJ PROBATION SERVICES

The case files for DJJ's intake and probation services for the period FY 02 and the first three quarters of FY 03 were included in our scope.

A statistical random sample of 100 intake cases with a referral date during FY 02 or the first three quarters of FY 03 was selected. Each intake case was tested for policy and procedural requirements. In addition, a statistical random sample of 100 cases that involved a juvenile on probation at any point during FY 02 or FY 03 was selected. Eighty-seven[7] files were tested for compliance with policy and procedural requirements. Internal supervisory and management controls were reviewed and evaluated.

Additionally, juvenile crime statistics reported in DJJ's annual reports to the legislature were reviewed for reasonableness, and a determination was made as to the adequacy of DJJ's staff to physically restrain and arrest juvenile offenders.

DJJ EMPLOYEE DISCIPLINE

Our scope included DHSS' internal administrative investigations from FY 98 through January 15, 2004. In addition, we reviewed employees' grievances and complaints filed with DOA, Division of Personnel, Labor Relations from FY 98 through April 2003.

All investigations for client abuse were identified, and the dispositions were reviewed for consistency. We also determined whether any of these investigations resulted in the filing of a grievance with DOA by the employee in the matter.

[7] We did not test all 100 files because, in one region, initial testing determined a high error rate and continued testing was not considered necessary.

We interviewed DHSS and DOA human resources and labor-relations employees to determine the process and procedures for administrative investigations. Certain DOA labor-relation grievance files were examined, as well as personnel files at the DHSS human resources office.

MANAGEMENT TRAVEL

Our scope for FY 02 included the travel of 20 employees[8] in upper- and mid-management positions. The scope was extended to include the FY 01 travel for one individual due to a high rate of noncompliance issues related to the FY 02 travel. Additionally, because of the changes in governor and the administration of the department, we reviewed travel in FY 03 for 26 employees[9] in upper- and mid-management positions. In total, 253 travel authorizations[10] (TA), totaling $215,090, were tested.

Each TA was tested for compliance with laws, regulations, and policies. The duty station of each employee was reviewed for compliance with policy. Travel logs were obtained and reviewed. We interviewed administrative staff and those employees whose travel was under review.

[8] The FY 02 scope included 6 individuals in the Office of the Commissioner, 10 with DFYS, and 4 with DJJ.
[9] The FY 03 scope included 9 individuals in the Office of the Commissioner, 14 with DFYS, and 3 with DJJ.
[10] This is the form used to document estimated costs for preapproval and actual costs incurred after travel.

ORGANIZATION AND FUNCTION

Department of Health and Social Services

Created under Alaska Statute (AS) 18.05 and charged with its responsibilities under AS 47, the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) was established to administer the laws and regulations relating to the promotion and protection of the health and well-being of Alaskans. The department is responsible for a wide variety of health and social service programs. Traditionally, programs included medical assistance, public assistance, children's services, youth corrections, alcoholism and drug abuse, mental health and developmental disabilities, and public health.

On July 1, 2003, a major reorganization took place that affected several state departments, as it was designed to maximize federal funding for services. DHSS assumed responsibility for the senior services, adult protective services, assisted-living licensing, and longevity programs.

Further, as a result of the restructuring, the former Division of Family and Youth Services (DFYS) received three programs from the Division of Public Health and one from the Division of Medical Assistance. The restructured division is now called the Office of Children's Services (OCS). Throughout this report we will refer to DFYS, as that was the entity that was audited; however, recommendations will be made to OCS in recognition of the current organizational structure.

The DHSS FY 04 operating budget was about $1.7 billion; there were 3,401 total positions authorized.

Office of the Commissioner

The Office of the Commissioner has a staff of nine and an FY 04 operating budget of $810,600. The incumbent commissioner took over the agency in January 2003 with the change in the state's administration. The Office of the Commissioner oversees the operations of the department.

Office of Children's Services

OCS has administrative responsibility for the development and implementation of the Child and Family Services Plan, including all policies and procedures relating to child protection services, child placement services, adoption, family preservation, and family support. In addition, beginning in FY 04, OCS administers the Women, Infant and Children's Program, the Early Intervention Program, and the Healthy Families Alaska Program.

There are 28 field offices under four regional offices in Fairbanks, Palmer, Anchorage, and Juneau. The OCS deputy commissioner oversees approximately 450 employees. In FY 04, the division investigated 12,088 reports of child abuse or neglect and served about 2,000 children in out-of-home placements. The division's operating budget was approximately $137 million.

Division of Juvenile Justice

DJJ, formerly called Youth Corrections, was split out of DFYS in 1999 and established as a separate division, but still within the department. DJJ uses the restorative justice methodology when counseling and providing services. Restorative justice is based on returning all the parties involved in, or affected by, a crime to their original condition.

DJJ's mission is to hold juvenile offenders accountable for their behavior, to promote the safety and restoration of victims and communities, and to assist offenders and their families in developing skills to prevent further crime. Victims receive restitution from the offender and have the option of actively participating in the services provided to the juvenile.

DJJ operates in four regions: northern, southcentral, Anchorage, and southeastern, with regional offices in Fairbanks, Palmer, Anchorage, and Juneau. The 14 field offices are located throughout rural Alaska. DJJ oversees eight youth facilities with space for a total of 133 youths waiting for a decision on the outcome of their offenses and 155 spaces for youths who are receiving long-term treatment.

The DJJ director supervises approximately 450 employees. In FY 04, the division responded to almost 6,200 requests for action from a law enforcement agency or a juvenile probation officer alleging the commission of a crime or violation of a court order by a juvenile. The average daily population for the FY 04 fiscal year in DJJ's eight youth facilities was about 247 juveniles. The operating budget was about $38 million: 32% for delivery of probation services and delinquency prevention, and 68% directed to operation of the youth facilities.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Throughout the Report Conclusions, we will refer to the Division of Family and Youth Services (DFYS), the entity that was audited. However, recommendations in the Findings and Recommendations section will be made to the Office of Children's Services (OCS) in recognition of the current organizational structure. The Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) did not undergo any organizational change.

In addition to the reorganization of the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) in July 2003, there were the following changes that significantly affected the Division of Family and Youth Services (DFYS), now the Office of Children's Services (OCS), as well as the Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ).

Social worker licensing

Alaska Statute (AS) 08.95 was amended with a July 2001 effective date to require the occupational licensing of social workers. This amendment was primarily a move to provide professional social workers with title protection. It has proven to have had quite an effect on DFYS for hiring and retention purposes.

Before the amendment went into effect, DFYS studied the issue and prepared an analysis entitled *Social Worker Licensing Implementation* to project the impact of the licensure requirement on the division. The study indicated that 72% (112 out of 155) of DFYS social workers intended to seek licensure and that 81% of students from the University of Alaska, School of Social Work, intended to take the examination to become licensed. The students who were surveyed responded favorably toward working for child protection services, but only 23% stated that they were considering employment at DFYS. DFYS was not the workplace of choice because of the negative public image of the division, concerns for personal safety, low pay, and large caseloads.

As part of the *Social Worker Licensing Implementation* study, DFYS contacted five other states and determined that only two required their social workers to be licensed. One of the remaining three states allowed a licensing exemption for its state agency employees. In the other two states, child protection social workers used the job title "case manager," which exempted them from the licensing requirement.

According to the U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO), *". . . both state and private child welfare agencies are experiencing similar challenges recruiting and retaining qualified caseworkers."*[11]

[11] U.S. General Accounting Office, *"HHS Could Play a Greater Role in Helping Child Welfare Agencies Recruit and Retain Staff,"* (GAO-03-357), March 2003.

The Child Welfare League of America stated in its study of the child welfare workforce[12] that child welfare agencies are in a crisis for the following reasons: (1) there are not enough qualified applicants in the recruitment pool; (2) agencies are not able to compete in terms of salary, benefits, and working conditions; and (3) agencies are unable to retain workers. Additional problems that impact recruitment and retention of child welfare workers identified in the study are the *"difficult and rigid state licensing requirements, lack of expertise in human resources, and lack of funds for effective recruiting."*

Another study, performed in October 2001 by the Alaska Department of Administration, Division of Personnel, surveyed the National Association of State Personnel Executives regarding each state's social worker licensure requirement. Of the 22 states that participated in that study, only 9 (41%) required social worker licensure.

Finally, DHSS conducted an analysis in December 2001 of the social worker (children's services) job class series and concluded that the legislature had made it more difficult to recruit for OCS social worker positions by requiring licensure.[13] As of June 30, 2003, only 23% (34 out of 151) of the social workers at OCS were licensed.[14] The remaining 117 unlicensed workers were exempted from the licensure requirement by statute.[15] (See Exhibit 2 on the next page)

OCS' new management information system

OCS began to develop a new management information system in 1995, but was unsuccessful. The project was put on hold until FY 01, when $5.4 million in federal funding was obtained. One contract was awarded for development of the system requirements, and subsequently a second one for system design and implementation. In total, almost $16 million was appropriated for the system, with approximately 60% federal funding.

The new management information system, Online Resources for the Children of Alaska (ORCA), will be the Alaska data-collection system required by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration of Children and Families under the Social Security Act. It is known as an Adoption and Foster Care Analysis Reporting System and must meet specific federal requirements. ORCA contains three components: a case management system, a licensing system, and a financial system.

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[12] Alwon, F., & Reitz, A. (2000). *"The Workforce Crisis in Child Welfare,"* Washington, D.C., Child Welfare League of America.

[13] The analysis stated, *"The education requirements and mandatory licensing cause the job standards for social workers to be more stringent than those for the comparison classes and cannot be revised through any means but legislation. The licensure requirement limits DFYS' ability to assuage recruitment difficulties for social workers by the usual means available to most other agencies when experiencing recruitment difficulties."*

[14] In addition, there were two DFYS employees that had a social worker license, but worked in a job class that did not require licensure.

[15] AS 08.95 states that a *". . . person who, on June 30, 2001, was employed or providing services under the title 'social worker' may, without obtaining a license under this chapter, continue to use the title 'social worker' while the person is employed by the same employer, or, if self-employed, while providing the same scope of services, as of June 30, 2001."*

Exhibit 2

OCS Social Worker Positions as of June 30, 2003 (unaudited)			
Description	**Filled positions**	**Licensed staff**	**Percent licensed**
Required to be licensed:			
Social Worker (Children's Services) I	8	1	13%
Social Worker (Children's Services) II	94	24	26%
Social Worker (Children's Services) IV	42	9	21%
Social Worker (Children's Services) V	7	0	0%
Subtotal of Social Worker positions	**151**	**34**	**23%**
Not required to be licensed:			
Children's Services Specialist I	19	1	5%
Children's Services Specialist II	28	0	0%
Subtotal of Children's Services Specialist positions	**47**	**1**	**4%**
Total of all Social Worker positions	**198**	**35**	**18%**

According to the project manager, ORCA was tested in the Fairbanks Office of Children's Services in July 2004 and is expected to be in place in early September 2004.

DJJ's new management information system

The Juvenile Offender Management Information System (JOMIS) is the primary repository for juvenile-offense history records for the State. It combines probation and youth facility records into a shared web-based system. JOMIS can be accessed from any Internet-connected computer by an authorized user. As information is added or updated, it is immediately available to the user.

System design and development for JOMIS was contracted for in 1999, and the system became operational in April 2002. The associated costs for the system design and development totaled about $1.8 million, of which 98% was funded by federal grant monies.

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REPORT CONCLUSIONS

Throughout the Report Conclusions, we will refer to the Division of Family and Youth Services (DFYS), the entity that was audited. However, recommendations in the Findings and Recommendations section will be made to the Office of Children's Services (OCS) in recognition of the current organizational structure. The Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) did not undergo any organizational change.

Our review addressed various management issues within the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) related to DFYS (now the Office of Children's Services), DJJ, and the Office of the Commissioner.

A summary of our more significant conclusions follows:

- Management faces high turnover at DFYS
- Both DFYS and DJJ management should address issues raised by employees
- Social worker licensure and the related stipend program are flawed
- Grantees providing services to DFYS and DJJ clients are not adequately monitored
- DFYS does not perform a thorough internal child-fatality review when the child was in state custody at the time of death or had received services from DFYS
- Rural DFYS field offices are not adequately supervised
- DFYS caseloads are high and vary significantly statewide
- DJJ intake and probation services are not in compliance with policies and standards
- Instances of child abuse by state-employee caregivers are not properly reported
- DHSS needs to train its own employees, who are caregivers to children held in state custody, how to recognize and report child abuse
- DHSS' commissioners and management employees within DFYS and DJJ do not use cost-saving policies and procedures for travel

The Report Conclusions and related Findings and Recommendations sections are organized into five categories:

1. DFYS and DJJ personnel management issues
2. DFYS field office management
3. DJJ probation services
4. DJJ employee discipline
5. Management travel

The Objectives, Scope, and Methodology section is organized in the same manner and is an integral part of this report.

Our detailed conclusions for each audit category are as follows.

DFYS AND DJJ PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT ISSUES

Based on our audit of various management issues at DFYS and DJJ, we found the following:

- Management faces high employee turnover at DFYS
- Management needs to address issues raised by employees
- Implementation of social worker licensure at DFYS is flawed
- Stipend program is costly and yields minimal benefits for DFYS
- DFYS social workers' licenses are not maintained
- Performance evaluations and merit increases have not been timely
- Application of personnel rules is fair
- DFYS' administrative position upgrades are reasonable, but growth in administrative staff is questionable
- Grantees providing services to DFYS and DJJ clients are not adequately monitored
- Child fatalities are not thoroughly investigated by DFYS when the child was in state custody at the time of death or had received services from DFYS
- DFYS' licensing action committee is not necessary

These findings are discussed in detail below.

Management faces high employee turnover at DFYS

All over the United States, child welfare agencies face a dilemma in recruiting and retaining qualified workers. The Child Welfare League of America found in its study of the child welfare workforce[16] that: (1) there is an insufficient number of qualified applicants in the recruitment pool; (2) agencies are not able to compete in terms of salary, benefits, and working conditions; and (3) agencies are unable to retain workers. Additional problems that impact recruitment and retention of child welfare workers identified in the study are the *"difficult and rigid state licensing requirements, lack of expertise in human resources, and lack of funds for effective recruiting."*

In Alaska, management faces these same problems and others. Even with the change in administration in January 2003 and the reorganization of DHSS on July 1, 2003, management problems including high turnover, insufficient communication, and promotion of inexperienced staff still existed in the fall of 2003. Our analysis was based on vacancy and turnover rates for social workers (SW), children's services specialists (CSS), and juvenile probation officers (JPO); interviews with community resource providers and other stakeholders; employee responses to our survey of DFYS and DJJ current and former employees; and review of the stakeholders' comments from the federal *Alaska Child and Family Services Review*. (See Exhibit 3 on the opposite page)

[16] Alwon, F., & Reitz, A. (2000). *"The Workforce Crisis in Child Welfare,"* Washington, D.C., Child Welfare League of America.

Exhibit 3

Representative Stakeholder and Former DFYS Employee Comments Regarding Management
Stakeholder comments from the Alaska Child and Family Services Review September 2002
• There is a lack of clarity about the established roles and responsibilities of the various agency and nonagency workers involved with the family. • DFYS lacks policies regarding time frames for face-to-face contact with children. • Families are not monitored by the division to ensure they are receiving services. • High caseloads and turnover at DFYS result in inadequate visits with children being conducted by caseworkers. • The DFYS quality assurance process needs to be improved. • The quality and comprehensiveness of services provided by community resource providers are not sufficient. • Staff vacancies result in increased workloads for remaining workers. • DFYS is not proactive in forming partnerships with the communities.
Former DFYS Employee Survey Responses August 2003
• It is impossible for the State to fulfill its mandate so long as top- and middle-level management are allowed to lie, cover for one another, destroy evidence, and promote people from within who will collaborate in the same behavior. • There is favoritism by management regarding certain staff throughout the division. • Management only holds certain staff accountable. • DFYS is ingrained in the "good old boy" atmosphere. • Employees are not valued for the long hours, the high caseloads, and their performance of the job. • The division enlists and retains poor foster homes. • Caseworkers use bad judgment in making child placements.
Interviews with Stakeholders February 2004
• Program inconsistencies result from constant turnover in the agency. • The division does not have the ability to be proactive. • The division exists in a management-by-crisis style. • DFYS does not work effectively or congenially with families, Native organizations, or community resources. • There are inconsistencies in the types and availability of service among regions. • There is a lack of communication within the division and to the providers. When there is communication from the division, it is slow. • The amount of paperwork required is excessive. • There are too many levels of bureaucracy at the division. • Social workers receive little recognition.

Stakeholders included children, parents, foster parents, various levels of state and local DFYS personnel, collaborating agency personnel, school personnel, service providers, court personnel, legislators, and attorneys.

Vacancy and turnover rates were calculated and analyzed for FY 00 and FY 03.[17] DFYS had consistently high turnover and relatively low vacancy rates for both fiscal years. For DJJ, both the vacancy and turnover rates increased during that time period. For the rural JPOs, however, the vacancy rate soared because the division intentionally held some positions vacant. The explanations given for holding the positions vacant were decreases in federal funding and a division-wide hiring freeze based on the resultant budget constraints. (See Exhibit 4)

Exhibit 4

DJJ – DFYS Vacancy and Turnover Rates FY 00 and FY 03				
	Turnover		**Vacancy**	
DFYS (SW and CSS)	**FY 00**	**FY 03**	**FY 00**	**FY 03**
Urban	28%	35%	6%	7%
Rural	30%	41%	8%	13%
Overall	29%	37%	7%	9%
DJJ (JPO)				
Urban	6%	7%	9%	9%
Rural	7%	13%	2%	29%
Overall	6%	9%	8%	18%

When the positions that were intentionally held vacant by DJJ during FY 03 were eliminated from the calculations, the vacancy rate dropped significantly. (See Exhibit 5)

Exhibit 5

DJJ – JPO Vacancy Rate (Excludes Positions Intentionally Held Vacant During FY 03)	
Location	Revised Vacancy Rate
Urban	3%
Rural	5%
Overall	4%

An analysis of the FY 03 SW and CSS turnover and vacancy rates determined that the CSS job class has a significantly higher rate of turnover than the SW job class: 71% for the children's services specialists versus 23% for social workers. CSS employees are not able to advance beyond a CSS III because of the social worker licensure requirement.[18] A CSS carries the same caseload as a SW; performs the same work; and, except for the entry-level positions, receives less pay. (See Exhibit 6 on the next page) It appears that many children's services specialists get discouraged and find other employment.

[17] The vacancy rate is the number of days in the fiscal year that all positions were empty, divided by the total number of possible workdays for all positions. The turnover rate is the number of times a vacant position became filled in the fiscal year, divided by the total number of positions.

[18] No positions in the SW III or CSS III job classes have been budgeted for FY 05.

Exhibit 6

Division of Family and Youth Services Comparison of Social Workers and Children's Services Specialists Job Class Specifications			
Job Class	**Minimum Qualifications**	**Pay Range**	**Beginning Salary**
Social Worker (SW)			
SW I	Bachelor's degree in social work and a current social worker license issued by the State of Alaska.	15	$37,260
SW II	Bachelor's degree in social work and a current social worker license issued by the State of Alaska.	17	$42,852
SW III	Current social worker license issued by the State of Alaska and one year of full proficiency level professional experience equivalent to SW II.	18	$46,080
Children's Services Specialist (CSS)			
CSS I	Bachelor's degree with a major in social, behavioral, or health science, law, or a related field.	15	$37,260
CSS II	Bachelor's degree with a major in social, behavioral, or health science, law, or a related field; and one year of full proficiency level professional experience.	16	$39,996
CSS III	Bachelor's degree with a major in social, behavioral, or health science, law, or a related field; and two years of full proficiency level professional experience.	17	$42,852

Source of information: State of Alaska, Department of Administration.

Although the overall DFYS turnover rate is below or in line with the national average—estimated to be around 30% to 40% annually for child welfare agency staff[19]—the DFYS management should be concerned with its overall 37% turnover rate. The Child Welfare League of America identified mismanagement as a key factor in high staff turnover; it recommends ongoing evaluation of administration, management, and the control environment to assist in overall reduction of turnover.[20]

To assist in determining reasons for turnover, we analyzed former DFYS employees' responses to the survey, which indicated that

Exhibit 7

Most Frequent Reasons Why Employees Left DFYS/DJJ Employment
DFYS
Believed clients not adequately served Excessive job stress Overall poor management Too few people to handle the workload
DJJ
Lack of opportunities for advancement Lack of recognition for job performance Make better use of skills and abilities Personal reasons

[19] U.S. General Accounting Office, *"HHS Could Play a Greater Role in Helping Child Welfare Agencies Recruit and Retain Staff"*, (GAO-03-357), March 2003.
[20] Susan Wells, "Child Protective Services: Research For The Future," *Child Welfare*, September 1994.

the primary reasons for leaving the division related to management issues.[21] (See Exhibit 7 on the previous page)

Former DJJ employees responded that personal issues were the number-one reason to leave the division. Job-related issues, rather than management issues, comprised the other top three reasons. This may account, in part, for the much lower turnover rate at DJJ when compared with DFYS.

Exit conferences are one method for management to learn why an employee has chosen to terminate employment. This provides management with the opportunity to consider new ideas and changes that may improve divisional operations. According to departmental policy,[22] even though the divisions are not required to perform an exit interview, they are required to conduct a final performance evaluation. The two should be combined. In the survey, 72% of former DFYS staff and 62% of former DJJ staff stated that they were not given an exit interview.

Of the 53 DFYS and 32 DJJ survey respondents that were given an exit interview, the majority indicated they were able to provide good suggestions about improving operations. However, some respondents felt that their suggestions were ignored or would not be acted upon. Others said they did not provide suggestions due to fear of being blackballed and prohibited from obtaining future state employment. Exit interviews are a valuable tool for the agency, and DHSS should ensure that all departing employees are afforded the opportunity to comment on division operations.

DFYS and DJJ managers should take advantage of all opportunities and tools available to them in defining and solving internal problems that lead to high turnover. (See Recommendation No. 1)

Management needs to address issues raised by employees

As previously noted, DFYS former employees indicated management-related issues were the primary reasons for leaving employment at the division. Of the 202 former DFYS employee respondents, nearly 50% indicated overall poor management was the reason for leaving DFYS. Twenty (22%) of the 90 former DJJ employee respondents indicated the same reason for leaving DJJ employment.

Analysis of survey responses indicated that both DFYS and DJJ current employees have issues with one or more levels of management. Responders were presented with 17 questions about their immediate supervisor, 5 questions concerning regional management, and 6 questions focusing on upper-level management. Of the 300 DFYS current employee

[21] Former DFYS employees' negative comments were generally directed toward the regional and central office managers, rather than toward their immediate supervisors.

[22] *State of Alaska, Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Administrative Services, Policy and Procedure Manual, Section 817(B)(4). "The supervisor must prepare a performance evaluation prior to the last day of employment for review and signature by the employee."*

respondents, 87% (262 employees) had concerns with at least one level of management. Of the 267 DJJ current employee respondents, 82% (218 employees) had similar concerns.

In order to understand the specific concerns, the written comments were reviewed. As a result, we were able to divide the concerns into two areas: management issues and management styles. These areas are discussed below in more detail.

Management issues

Both current and former employees of DFYS and DJJ expressed concerns to be addressed by management in the areas of human resources, management, supervision, and training. The following highlights the main concerns in each of these areas

- Human resource issues—a need for timely, objective employee evaluations; a process for staff to provide written evaluations of their supervisors; streamlining of the hiring process; flexible work schedules; consistent shift schedules (for DJJ youth counselors); and consideration of a 20-year retirement

- Management issues—a need for better communications with staff and consideration of staff ideas and comments before upper management makes policy decisions

- Supervision—a need for additional supervision of field staff, improved support of field supervisors by regional management, better allocation of workload and human resources, and improved oversight by DJJ upper management of youth facility superintendents and unit leaders

- Training—a need for improved supervisory skills through education and mentoring, and provision of additional on-the-job training for new employees

Based on the survey responses, it appears the current practice of informal discussions between employee and supervisor is insufficient and may not be used with all employees equally. This approach makes some employees feel inadequately supervised and not included in major policy decision discussions. DFYS and DJJ should communicate with staff, encourage exchanges of ideas among all levels of staff, and implement change when applicable (See Recommendation No. 1)

Management styles

Another theme in the responses from the survey was the concern over unprofessional management styles of the divisions' staff.[23] Many DFYS respondents described the management style of their superiors as unfair, disrespectful, dysfunctional, hostile, retaliatory, and biased.

[23] Concerns were generally directed toward regional and upper management rather than the respondent's immediate supervisor.

DJJ survey respondents' comments regarding management styles were much more positive. However, there were concerns regarding favoritism and disrespect shown to employees by management.

These characteristics of management styles are detrimental to the staff morale of both divisions. Those who manage and supervise staff should be trained and mentored to provide a positive work environment. (See Recommendation No. 2)

Some stakeholders interviewed are hopeful that, with the new DFYS deputy commissioner, a positive change in management of the division will occur. Their perception is that until DFYS fixes its internal management problems, DFYS will not be successful in its pursuit of becoming a community partner.

Implementation of social worker licensure at DFYS is flawed

In 1998, the Alaska State Legislature amended AS 08.95 by prohibiting *"the use of the title 'social worker' without a license."* It placed a delayed effective date of July 1, 2000, on the amendment. Alaska Statute 08.95 was further amended in 2000 to allow for the issuance of temporary social worker licenses and to further delay the effective date of the social worker licensure requirement to July 1, 2001.

In order to ease the difficulty in recruiting licensed social workers, DFYS established a second class of case workers, the children's services specialists. A CSS does not need to be licensed because the term "social worker" is not in the job title.[24] When DFYS is unable to fill a SW position due to the lack of qualified candidates, the position may be reclassified to the unlicensed CSS position. As of May 2004, DFYS had reclassified approximately 65 SW positions to the unlicensed CSS positions because of the lack of available licensed social workers.

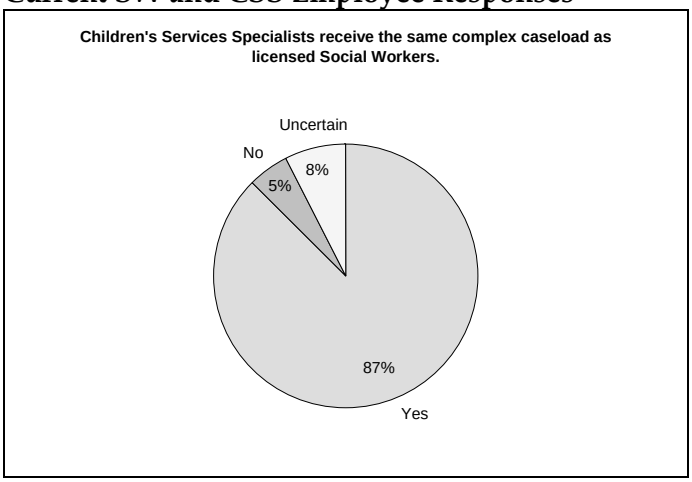
A CSS performs the same duties and has the same responsibilities as a SW—but without a social worker license—and, after the entry level, receives less compensation. Sixty-seven percent of the children's services specialists who responded to the survey stated that their current pay range is not fair, compared with that of other case workers in the department who do similar work. The State's position descriptions for both the SW and the CSS are identical except for the licensure requirement and the pay range.[25] Survey results showed 87% of the SW and CSS respondents agree that both types of case workers perform the same duties and have the same job responsibilities. (See Exhibit 8 on the next page)

[24] The licensure amendment basically provided title restriction to licensed social workers in Alaska.
[25] The social worker I and the children's services specialist I are paid at the same range. The difference in the pay occurs in the second level (II) in the two job-class series.

Because of the problems in finding qualified applicants to hire, on December 31, 2003—two and one-half years after the requirement for social worker licensure implementation—only 39 licensed social workers were employed at DFYS. This trial period is not long enough to meet one of the audit objectives, which was to *"determine if the administration's policy shift to licensed social workers was realistic and practical in Alaska."* It may take several more years of implementation to determine if the policy is feasible in Alaska. However, two individuals who have the same job responsibilities and caseloads should not be paid on a different pay scale. (See Recommendation No. 3)

Exhibit 8

Current SW and CSS Employee Responses



Stipend program is costly and yields minimal benefits for DFYS

To help educate and therefore be able to increase the number of licensed social workers, DFYS implemented a Recruitment and Retention Stipend Program (stipend program) in the fall of 1998. The stipend program offers financial assistance for unlicensed social worker employees to go back to school and obtain the appropriate degree needed for licensure. Based on year-end data for FY 02 and FY 03 and the *2003 IV-E Stipend Program Report*,[26] we determined that an additional 24 DFYS social worker employees have obtained their licenses. However, of those 24 employees, only one used the stipend program to assist in obtaining licensure. Seven others, grandfathered in by statute and still employed at DFYS on December 31, 2003, used the program but have not become licensed.

The stipend program does not appear to be as successful as was originally hoped. Based on a pre-implementation study by DFYS, 112 out of 155 DFYS social workers said they intended to seek licensure. However, only 24 of those 112 employees followed through on that declaration.

The recruitment portion of the stipend program offers financial assistance to Bachelor of Social Work students at the University of Alaska Anchorage and University of Alaska Fairbanks who perform a practicum in the DFYS offices in Anchorage or Fairbanks. (See Appendix E for amounts of stipend financial assistance)

Students who receive this financial assistance are obligated to apply for and accept any DFYS job offered to them after graduation and to remain employed at DFYS for

[26] This report was produced by the Family and Youth Services Training Academy, August 2003.

12 months.[27] Of the 48 stipend recipients, only 24 were ever recruited and employed by DFYS. Of those 24, only 11 still worked in the social worker job class on December 31, 2003.

DFYS does not perform adequate oversight of the stipend program to ensure that stipend recipients are offered positions at DFYS upon graduation. We believe the stipend program should be actively monitored to ensure its success.[28] (See Recommendation No. 4)

DFYS social workers' licenses are not maintained

As of December 31, 2003, DFYS employed six social workers, who were required to be licensed, that did not have an active license. Four of those six workers had allowed their licenses to expire; the remaining two had never been licensed social workers. In addition, another three social workers, who were grandfathered in to the class and who had also been licensed, permitted their licenses to expire because of difficulties in obtaining the appropriate continuing professional education.

DFYS should monitor employees' professional licenses and their renewals to ensure that the social workers continue to meet the minimum qualifications for their positions.

Performance evaluations and merit increases have not been timely

DFYS employees' annual performance evaluations and merit increases were not administered in a timely manner or, in some cases, not at all. According to the DHSS *Policy and Procedure Manual*:

> *Each supervisor will prepare evaluation reports for those employees who are completing a probationary period and eligible for permanent status. Permanent employees not in probationary status shall receive written evaluations annually or on their merit anniversary date.*

The department's policies and procedures also state that performance evaluations shall be performed before the final day of employment. During our testing of final-day evaluations, we found that none were performed on DFYS employees. Additionally, current DFYS employees' responses to the survey indicated that only 54% received their annual evaluations in a timely manner.

Former DJJ employees' annual performance evaluations were not performed in a timely manner, and only 25% received a final evaluation prior to termination. Current DJJ employees' annual performance evaluations indicated that the division had improved its

[27] Twenty-four (50%) of the 48 stipend recipients were initially hired at DFYS. As of December 31, 2003, 16 of them worked at DFYS in the following capacities: 11 social workers, 4 children's services specialists, and 1 community care license specialist.

[28] Due to a decline in the stipend program's funding, DFYS suspended new awards for FY 04 while continuing to fund ongoing awards.

timeliness in conducting the evaluations. This was supported by 82% of the DJJ employee survey responses, which stated that they received timely performance evaluations. In contrast to the evaluations, only 27% of the DJJ employees received their merit increases when due; they received retroactive pay 73% of the time.

The DHSS human resources office has a process for tracking performance evaluation due dates, but the office does not send notices to the supervisors to ensure that evaluations are performed in a timely manner and that none are missing. According to departmental policy and procedures, notices should be sent to supervisors when evaluation reports are overdue. However, the message—conveyed in our interviews with the department's human resources office—is that they would *"rather not see performance evaluations done at all if they are to be just slapped together."* (See Recommendation No. 5)

Application of personnel rules is fair

Current DFYS and DJJ survey respondents indicated that they generally believe the standards used to evaluate their job performance are fair. They also responded favorably toward other personnel issues, such as holding employees accountable when they do not meet performance standards, supporting career advancements, promoting individuals in the best interest of the division, and receiving opportunities to develop and apply job skills.

DFYS' administrative position upgrades are reasonable, but growth in administrative staff is questionable

Twelve positions in the DFYS Juneau central office were upgraded during the five-year period following FY 98. Exhibit 9 provides examples of some of the upgraded positions. The upgrades were made based on job responsibilities and position descriptions. The number of positions at the central office increased from 39 to 65 (67%) during the five-year period—whereas the number of positions at DFYS, as a whole, only increased from 317 to 399 (26%). The increases occurred in various classes of positions at the central office, some of which showed a growth in excess of 100%.[29] (See Exhibit 10 on the next page)

Exhibit 9

Examples of Upgraded Positions at DFYS Central Office

Original		Upgraded	
Position	Range	Position	Range
Accountant III	18	Social Services Program Coordinator	20
Administrative Clerk II	8	Administrative Assistant	13
Analyst/Programmer III	18	Data Processing Manager I	22
Social Worker IV	18	Social Services Program Coordinator	20

[29] The social worker positions in the central office were reclassified to administrative positions such as social services program coordinator, community care licensing coordinator, grants administration, and so forth.

Survey responses indicated 60% of current DFYS employees believe the central office resources are not used effectively. Many comments showed concern over the extreme growth in personnel at the central office during the five-year period, especially regarding the increase in positions that are above a range 19.[30] Many survey respondents said they perceive that central office employees are not knowledgeable about the programs, do not communicate and provide guidance to field staff, and do not perform their specified job duties. Through interviews with the program administrator and social services program officers and coordinators in the central office who monitor grants,[31] we determined that a significant portion of these employees do not adequately perform their jobs. (See the following discussion regarding grantee monitoring)

Exhibit 10

Budgeted Administrative Positions that Increased in Number by More Than 100% Between FY 99 and FY 03	
Budgeted Position	**Percent Increase**
Social Services Program Coordinator	175%
Social Services Associate	200%
Social Services Program Administrator	200%
Data Processing Manager	200%
Social Worker	250%
Accounting Technicians	400%
Micro/Network Technicians	400%

In addition, regional and field office staff complained that central office employees do not communicate effectively with the staff in other offices. Field office employees do not appear to understand or appreciate what central office personnel do to support the mission of the division. Based on these comments and various interviews with central office staff, we believe that DFYS should review the necessity for each central office position and encourage more effective communication among the offices. (See Recommendation No. 6)

Grantees providing services to DFYS and DJJ clients are not adequately monitored

Both DFYS and DJJ have positions in their central office to oversee the grants they award for services to their clients. DFYS has a staff of 19 employees in the central office who monitor 147 grants to 78 grantees, totaling $21.9 million. DJJ has 4 employees who monitor 81 grants to 53 grantees, totaling $2.1 million.

The federal reviewers[32] found that families are not being provided the services necessary to meet their needs. Survey comments focused on the lack of monitoring of the grantees by the central office to ensure that essential services are provided to children and their families. Survey respondents who are DFYS' social workers and children's services specialists, and DJJ's juvenile probation officers and youth counselors (42% and 15%, respectively), believe

[30] Between FY 98 and FY 03, the number of positions above a range 19 increased by 117%, from 12 to 26.
[31] There are 19 positions in the central office that are dedicated to grant oversight.
[32] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, *Alaska Child and Family Services Review, Final Report, September 2002,* item 17.

that grantees are not held accountable when they do not provide the contracted services, and yet the same grantees continue to receive grants year after year.

Based on the survey responses and comments, we reviewed the process for monitoring grants at both DFYS and DJJ. The employees responsible for monitoring could not provide us with documentation of oversight reviews on grantees and their services; we determined that, in many cases, these reviews are not being performed. Grantees are not being held accountable when client services are not being provided as outlined in the grant agreements.

According to DJJ staff, grantee reviews have decreased due to fiscal constraints. The reviews that were conducted were documented only intermittently and do not appear to be complete. (See Recommendation No. 7)

DFYS child-fatality reviews are not thorough

The State of Alaska has a Child Fatality Review Team [33] that assists the medical examiner in determining the cause and manner of death for all children less than 18 years of age. The team is composed of various stakeholders, one of whom is a social worker with DFYS who has experience in conducting investigations of child abuse and neglect.

In addition to the team's review, DFYS is also required by departmental policy written in the *Child Protective Services Manual* to perform a review.[34] The manual states:

> *The death of all children who were in DHSS custody at the time of death and all children who have had prior contact with the division is reviewed by the DFYS Quality Assurance Committee.*

However, DFYS does not have a Quality Assurance Committee. Instead, DFYS utilizes its Evaluation unit to conduct a limited review[35] of the child's case file and then documents its findings and recommendations in a memorandum of concern sent to the division's director (now deputy commissioner). The unit's effectiveness was hindered in the past by the previous director's lack of attention to the reports.

The limited review performed by the unit also does not appear to include a thorough case file review or interviews with people who had contact with the child prior to death. [36] An extended review would ensure that complete information is obtained to determine if there is a systemic or procedural problem or if additional social worker training is needed. Recommendations and corrective actions could then be designed to help prevent further incidents of child fatalities.

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[33] AS 12.65. Death Investigations and Medical Examiners.
[34] Section 6.1.12(e). Reports from the Child Fatality Review Team.
[35] During FY 03, the DHSS representative on the Child Fatality Review Team was a licensed social worker in the DFYS Evaluation unit.
[36] Individuals who should be contacted include the school nurse, social workers, licensing specialists, and community resource providers.

We reviewed several memorandums of concern[37] and determined the findings were consistently the same for each fatality. These findings included a lack of adherence to policies and procedures for investigations by social workers and for assessment of risk; overall lack of case planning and safety planning for the children; and significant deviations from standardized practices established in the *Child Protective Services Manual*. The recommendations from the memos were not implemented, and the corrective actions, if any, were not approved by the previous division director. (See Recommendation No. 8)

DFYS' licensing action committee is not necessary

DFYS' Community Care Licensing unit is charged with protecting children by licensing facilities for their out-of-home care. The unit also monitors care providers to ensure they do provide for the health and safety of the children. It investigates any complaints made about a particular home or care provider.

Currently, the Anchorage office has an informal licensing action committee that reviews any negative licensing actions made by the licensing unit. This committee is generally composed of the children's services manager, a social worker staff manager, and the licensing supervisor. We reviewed several licensed foster home investigations that had been conducted by the Anchorage Community Care Licensing unit. In one investigation, the licensing unit recommended closing the foster home due to neglect and abuse of the children housed in it. This recommendation was overruled by the licensing action committee. A year later, the children had to be removed from the home and the home was finally closed.[38]

The licensing action committee does not add to the licensing process and, in fact, may defeat the division's purpose to protect children from harm and abuse and provide for their safety. It would lend credibility to the licensing unit to bypass the licensing action committee. The affected individual or home has the option to appeal a licensing decision through the provisions of AS 47.35. (See Recommendation No. 9)

[37] The memorandums of concern that we reviewed covered the October 2000 to December 2001 time period.

[38] The federal Child and Family Services review determined that Alaska exceeds the national standard (0.57% or less) for the percentage of children experiencing maltreatment from caretakers while in foster care (1.91% for 2000).

DFYS FIELD OFFICE MANAGEMENT

We reviewed DFYS' field office management practices for: compliance with division policy regarding supervisory case reviews; adequacy of oversight, guidance, and support provided to the field offices; collaborative efforts with community resources and other state agencies; and caseload management.

Based on our audit, we found the following:

- The supervisory case review process is performed inconsistently
- Units reportedly are managed well, but rural worker contact with supervisors or regional management is limited
- Collaborative efforts with local community resources are strong
- Caseloads exceed national standards and vary significantly among field offices

Our detailed conclusions follow.

<u>The supervisory case review process is performed inconsistently</u>

The supervisory case review process is a key component of the division's quality assurance system.[39] The process requires performance of two control activities: structured case conferences and case-record reviews. According to the *Child Protective Services Manual*, case conferences between the supervisor and each worker are to be held at least monthly, documented, and followed up at the next conference. Policy also requires supervisors to review case records for investigations[40] at transfer or closure, and for ongoing cases[41] every three months[42] and at case closure.

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[39] The other two components are administrative reviews and quality assurance on-site reviews. Administrative reviews occur quarterly in the first year of a case and semiannually thereafter. The purpose of these reviews is to monitor progress toward permanence, to facilitate accountability, and to ensure consistency of service provision. Parties participating in the review include the parent or custodian; caseworker; supervisor; guardian ad litem; and, for Native children, a Native representative and regional Indian Child Welfare Act specialist. Depending on the type of review, participants may also include the child, attorneys, outside community members, service providers, foster parents, or others involved in the case.

Quality assurance on-site reviews are performed by the division's Evaluation unit. These reviews assess performance at the field office level. The assessment includes testing a sample of cases for compliance with federal and state requirements; interviewing community stakeholders such as parents, foster parents, representatives from the Native community, and attorneys; and interviewing field office staff and management regarding the overall operations of the field office.

[40] When DFYS receives a report of harm concerning a child, it performs an intake process whereby the caseworker determines the validity of the report and assesses the risk of further maltreatment. Following that determination, an investigation may be performed. An investigation is a fact-finding and assessment process that determines the risk to the child and the need for protective services, identifies the best strategies to ensure protection of the child, and develops a safety plan.

[41] An ongoing case is one where a report of harm has been investigated and DFYS has determined to continue to monitor and provide services to the child. In almost 99% of the cases, the child is taken into state custody.

[42] Prior to January 1, 2002, the standard was to review cases every four months. The requirement was increased to quarterly reviews to coincide with the administrative reviews.

The division has separate forms for documenting reviews of investigations and ongoing cases. Designed as checklists, these forms prompt supervisors to assess the performance of required case actions and to refer reviewers and workers to the CPS policies and procedures. Division policy mandates the use of these forms.

Through discussions with management and supervisors from each of the four regions, we determined that the supervisory case review process is operating neither effectively nor consistently throughout the division. Although performance varies from region to region, among field offices within the same region, and between case conferences and case-record reviews, it appears that:

- For each region, current practices generally include performing weekly or biweekly case conferences and documenting them. However, two non-administrative units[43] reported that from July 1, 2001, through March 2003, case conferences either did not formally occur or else occurred but were not documented.

- During the same period, none of the regions consistently performed quarterly, ongoing case-record reviews. Depending on the office, these reviews generally occurred sporadically or not at all.

- Some offices performed investigation case-record reviews at transfer or closure. One of the four regions reported that when it performs the review, it is noted in the case assessment form in the case file and not on the required forms.

Further, there is no formal mechanism in place for upper management to monitor performance and effectiveness of the supervisory case review process.[44]

In general, regional management and supervisors agree that although the supervisory case review process is conceptually good, there are many challenges to fully implementing the record-review portion of the process. Reasons cited for noncompliance include: the standard is impractical given the agency's high caseloads; supervision is primarily verbal, immediate, and ongoing; the process is time consuming[45]; the process duplicates other quality assurance controls, such as the administrative reviews; and the forms are not well designed.[46] Management should strengthen the process to improve its usefulness both as a supervisory tool and as a quality assurance control. (See Recommendation No. 10)

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[43] Some regional and the larger field offices are divided into units, i.e., clerical, intake, investigation, ongoing, and licensing.

[44] The staff manager position description states that one of the responsibilities is to "*audit case files of supervisors and the professional staff on a random sample basis to ensure quality, quantity and accuracy of work.*" Yet only one staff manager reports performing such audits, and these did not begin until December 2003.

[45] One supervisor estimated it takes 15 minutes to complete an intake-case record review and two hours to perform an ongoing-case file review.

[46] One supervisor suggested having separate forms for "new" versus "established" ongoing cases due to the varied requirements of the different type of cases.

Units reportedly are managed well, but rural worker contact with supervisors or regional management is limited

The division consists of 4 regional offices and 28 field offices[47] statewide. One-half of the field offices have on-site supervisors. In addition to overseeing workers in their base field offices, some of these supervisors also oversee workers in one or more satellite field offices, which do not have on-site supervisors.[48] Within each region, supervisors report to staff managers who, in turn, report to the regional children's services manager. The four children's services managers report to the field administrator in Juneau, who oversees all the regions and underlying field offices.

We surveyed employees from both urban and rural field offices regarding various aspects of field office management. No significant variances between urban and rural worker responses were noted. Furthermore, despite challenges imposed by high caseloads, 75% of both urban and rural employees who were surveyed reported that their units are managed well and rated their immediate supervisor's capability as good to excellent.

The survey results notwithstanding, there are tangible differences between the supervision of workers in field offices with on-site supervisors and those without. In the latter case, communication is primarily through telephone and email, and opportunities for on-site observation, training, and interaction are inherently limited by distance and travel costs.

According to regional management, workers in field offices without on-site supervision communicate at least once a week with off-site supervisors. Contact with less experienced workers may be as often as several times a week. Further, 91% of rural social worker survey respondents reported that their supervisors generally respond to their questions either the same day or the next day.

While employee survey results and discussions with management indicate communication is regular, it appears that on-site contact is below division standards. Historically, the division's expectation has been that regional managers and supervisors visit the field offices they oversee quarterly. However, 44% of rural worker respondents reported that their field offices do not receive even an annual visit from regional management.

To gain additional perspective on regional management and supervisor travel to field offices, we also reviewed central and regional office travel logs for FY 02 and FY 03. These travel logs indicated that most of the field offices received regional management and supervisor visits far less often than the standard. During the period from July 1, 2001, to March 31, 2003, eight of the field offices with on-site supervisors received three or fewer regional

[47] There were 29 field offices; the Fort Yukon office closed in FY 04. Not included in the count are an itinerant office under the Southcentral Regional Office and the Fairbanks rural unit under the Northern Regional Office.

[48] This list includes Craig, Haines, Wrangell, Cordova, Dillingham, Homer, King Salmon, Seward, St. Mary's, Unalaska, Valdez, Galena, and Kotzebue.

management visits.[49] In this same time period, eight of the field offices without on-site supervisors received three or fewer supervisor visits.[50] (See Recommendation No. 11)

Collaborative efforts with local community resources are strong

The division works with various community resources and other agencies to improve service delivery to children and families. This conclusion is based on discussions with regional management, employee survey results, and the U.S. Children's Bureau and Administration for Children and Families' 2002 *Alaska Child and Family Services Review*.[51] Each of these is discussed below and corroborates the others.

Southeastern Regional Office management noted there are multidisciplinary teams in Sitka, Ketchikan, and Juneau. The Southcentral Regional Office cited very good relations with Native organizations in Aniak and Bethel and collaborative efforts with Village Public Safety Officers and Indian Child Welfare Act workers. The Anchorage Regional Office reported collaborations with many state and nonstate agencies and Native organizations. The Northern Regional Office stated that Native involvement is built into the process and that rural offices have daily to multiple-weekly contacts with Native organizations. The northern region maintains strong relations with Kawerak, the Maniilaq Association, the Native Village of Barrow, the Tanana Chiefs Conference, and the Fairbanks Native Association.

Approximately 96% of SW and CSS respondents reported that their units collaborate with local community resources, that contact is made with community resources during investigative stages, and that community members provide additional contacts with children and families. Additionally, 73% of the SWs stated that the division solicits assistance from Native organizations to recruit Native foster parents and works effectively with community members and other state agencies.

Federal reviewers evaluated the State's performance on a number of issues. One issue it assessed was the division's responsiveness to the community. Alaska was found to be in substantial conformity with this factor. The agency's strengths included consulting with stakeholders and coordinating services with other federally funded programs.

Caseloads exceed national standards and vary significantly among field offices

High caseloads are a primary concern among workers. These caseloads affect many areas including child safety, compliance with standards, casework quality, unit morale, ability to

[49] The list includes Ketchikan, Petersburg, Aniak, Kenai, Kodiak, Delta, McGrath, and Nome.
[50] The list includes Craig, Haines, Wrangell, Cordova, King Salmon, Seward, Unalaska, Valdez, Fort Yukon, and Galena.
[51] This review was coordinated by the federal agency and conducted by a team of federal reviewers, Alaska DFYS staff, Alaska Division of Legislative Audit staff, and staff from similar agencies from ten other states.

attend training, and employee turnover. Nearly half (48%) of all respondents reported that staffing levels in their units often are inadequate.[52] (See Exhibit 11)

Exhibit 11

Current DFYS Employee Responses

Further, 73% of the social worker respondents reported working more than 37.5 hours a week; 17% of those reported working more than 50 hours a week. Also, 60% of the DFYS respondents believe that the central office resources are not used effectively; of these respondents, 65% indicated a better use for these resources would be for "field operations," while 31% thought a better use would be for "regional operations."

Exhibit 12, on the next page, shows the agency's staffing and caseloads[53] at July 1, 2003. As shown in the exhibit, caseloads for most field offices exceed national standards.[54] In fact, for 30% of the field offices, caseloads are substantially greater than the standard.[55]

Findings of the *Alaska Child and Family Services Review* underscore the negative impact that ongoing high caseloads have had on the agency's performance. The review found that Alaska did not substantially comply with required federal child-welfare measures in the areas of safety, permanency, and well-being. Some of the areas identified as needing improvement were: timely initiating of investigations; facilitating visitation between children and parents; involving the children and families in case planning; and assessing and meeting the service needs of children, parents, and foster parents. To address the ongoing problem of high caseloads, the Office of Children's Services (OCS) has requested 26 new positions for FY 05.

[52] The employee survey defined the response categories as: *Always* (90 to 100% of the time); *Most of the time* (about 75% of the time); *Sometimes* (about 50% of the time); *Hardly ever* (about 25% of the time); or *Never* (0 to 10% of the time). In this example, responses of *Never* and *Hardly ever* add up to 48% and indicate that staffing levels generally are inadequate.

[53] The basic calculation for caseload is the number of cases divided by the number of front-line workers.

[54] DFYS adopted the caseload standards recommended by the Child Welfare League of America and adjusted them for differences in the geographic size of the area served and the availability of transportation.

[55] This percentage includes field offices for which cases per available worker and/or cases per authorized worker are substantially greater than the standard. The number of available workers is the number of positions filled with workers who manage cases; the number of authorized workers is the number of positions funded by the legislature.

Exhibit 12

DFYS Caseloads by Region and Field Office
July 1, 2003
(unaudited)

Region	Field Office	Standard Caseloads	Available Front-line Workers	Cases per Available Worker	Authorized Front-line Workers	Cases per Authorized Position
Anchorage	**Region Total/Average**	**15**	**50**	**29**	**54**	**27**
Southcentral	Kenai	14	8	20	9	16
	Mat-Su	14	8	19	8	17
	Bethel	13	7	25	9	25
	Aniak	12	1	41	2	21
	Cordova	14	1	18	1	18
	Dillingham	13	2	33	2	33
	Homer	14	2	34	2	34
	King Salmon	12	1	6	2	3
	Kodiak	14	1	27	2	14
	Seward	13	1	11	1	11
	St. Mary's	12	1	88	2	44
	Unalaska	12	1	5	1	5
	Valdez	12	1	29	1	29
	Region Total/Average		**35**	**24**	**42**	**20**
Northern	Fairbanks	15	18	19	18	19
	Fairbanks Rural Area	12	2	15	2	15
	Galena	12	0	N/A	1	26
	Nome	13	4	16	4	16
	Fort Yukon	12	0	N/A	1	3
	Barrow	13	3	17	3	17
	Delta	13	2	18	2	18
	McGrath	12	0	N/A	1	17
	Kotzebue	13	1	86	2	43
	Region Total/Average		**30**	**22**	**34**	**19**
Southeastern	Juneau	15	11.5	16	11.5	16
	Ketchikan	15	5	14	5	14
	Craig	15	2	14	2	14
	Haines	13	0	N/A	1	0
	Petersburg	13	1	10	1	10
	Sitka	14	2	10	2	10
	Wrangell	12	1	8	1	8
	Region Total/Average		**22.5**	**14**	**23.5**	**13**
	Statewide Total/Average		**138**	**24**	**155**	**21**

Source: DFYS Research and Data Analysis Section

Substantially greater than the established standard caseload.

In addition to frustration over high caseloads, survey respondents expressed concern that manpower resources are not distributed equitably among the field offices. Indeed, as Exhibit 12 on the previous page shows, caseloads can vary considerably across field offices. At July 1, 2003, workers' caseloads ranged from 5 to 88. Of the four regions, the Southeastern Regional Office's field office caseloads most closely approximated the standard.

Some of the variance in caseloads across field offices is due to positions that are vacant or filled with new workers who do not yet manage a caseload.[56] However, even when caseloads are calculated based on the number of authorized positions, there still are significant variances statewide.

DFYS management notes that a strict comparison of caseloads across field offices can be misleading because the caseload calculation does not take into account many factors that affect workload. In larger offices, for example, staff may work only on investigations, whereas in a smaller office, in addition to performing investigations and ongoing casework, a worker's duties may include clerical work and frequent travel. While these factors may explain some variation in the caseload distribution, we do not believe they can reasonably account for the larger variances noted. Management has stated that it plans to conduct a workload study to better identify where manpower resources need to be distributed. (See Recommendation No. 12)

[56] Management reported that vacancies exist in social worker positions because of difficulties in recruiting for rural offices and administrative delays in the hiring process.

DJJ PROBATION SERVICES

We audited DJJ's management and provision of delinquency intake and probation supervision for compliance with division policies and obtained information regarding reported reduction in juvenile crimes and arrests of juveniles by probation officers.

Based on our audit, we found the following:

- Probation services are not in compliance with policy
- Absence of supervisory reviews hinders detection of noncompliance with policies and affects other management issues
- Workload contributes to policy noncompliance
- Management information system is not always accurate
- Analyses of juvenile crime statistics by management are deemed reasonable
- New offenses are committed by juveniles while on probation
- JPOs' readiness to restrain and arrest offenders is on the decline

These findings are discussed in detail below.

Probation services are not in compliance with policy

DJJ probation services consist of two components: delinquency intake and probation supervision. Below is our analysis of each component.

Component A: Delinquency Intake

Delinquency intake involves a referral[57] from a law enforcement agency or a JPO alleging the commission of a crime or violation of a court order by a juvenile. During intake, the JPO investigates whether or not the allegation is legally sufficient[58] to support filing a court petition. If legal sufficiency exists, the JPO then gathers information to determine the type of action needed to be taken by DJJ that will best serve the juvenile and the public.

Types of actions taken by the JPO for a referral with legal sufficiency include:

- Dismissal without prejudice[59]
- Informal diversion[60] with or without referral to services[61]

[57] A referral is a request for DJJ action following the arrest of a juvenile or as a result of a police report alleging the commission of a crime or violation of a court order (probation). A referral is counted as a single episode or event and may consist of multiple charges.
[58] The JPO has to determine if enough evidence exists to prosecute under delinquency proceedings.
[59] If the offense is of a minor nature and the juvenile and parent cannot be located or have refused to respond, the referral is dismissed. However, if the juvenile subsequently is referred on a new offense, the dismissed referral may be reopened and processed with the new referral.
[60] As established by AS 47.12.010 (b) (10), one of the goals of creating a balanced juvenile justice system is to "divert" juveniles from undergoing court action, if possible, through early intervention. The JPO must decide

- Informal probation[62]petition for delinquency adjudication with the court
- Recommendation of formal diversion by the court.

Informal diversion and informal probation require the juvenile to pay restitution and/or comply with the conditions set by the JPO. Conditions are established by the court for delinquency adjudication; under a formal diversion the JPO sets the conditions, but the court must approve the diversion agreement. Both of these actions require payment of restitution by the juvenile, among other conditions.

DJJ policy states that, despite the decision-making criteria provided, the JPOs "*exercise a great deal of discretion* [for intake decisions]." It further states:

> *In order to achieve the level of accountability required and to document the manner in which discretion is exercised, a number of uniform case management and reporting forms are required. Probation Officers must document their activities and decisions. Intake activities and decisions will be the subject of quarterly supervisory audits to determine compliance with intake procedures and intake decision standards.*

The following four significant areas for delinquency intake have high rates of noncompliance:

1. <u>Intake decisions are not timely</u>

   Almost 25% of the intake decisions tested were not made within the required time frame.[63] This could be mitigated with more direct supervisory involvement in the intake process. A timely decision addresses an issue quickly while also reinforcing accountability.[64] If youths are not confronted with their offenses in a timely manner, DJJ's impact is reduced because the youths view their actions as not causing a significant problem or as having few effects.

2. <u>Intake decisions are not supported by documentation</u>

   In 17% of the audited referral files, there was not adequate, or in some cases any, documentation of criteria or circumstances that a JPO considered in making his intake

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whether or not the juvenile can be held accountable for his conduct and whether his needs can be met by other programs outside the formal state and judicial systems. Informal diversion does not include probation conditions.

[61] When, in the opinion of the JPO, the matter referred does not warrant either informal probation or formal court action, the juvenile and/or the parent(s) must voluntarily participate in counseling or other available community services.

[62] With consent of the juvenile and his parent(s) or guardian, the JPO may place the juvenile under probation not ordered by a court. The JPO sets the conditions for probation.

[63] Once a referral is received, the JPO is required to decide within 30 days what type of action is to be taken.

[64] AS 47.12.010 (b) states that the purposes of the chapter includes, among other items, provision of swift and consistent consequences for juveniles who have committed crimes; diversion of the juvenile from the formal juvenile justice system through early intervention; and provision of an early, individualized assessment and action plan for each juvenile offender.

decision.[65] The Intake Determination Record and Plan form provides space to take notes on different factors that are to be considered during a JPO's investigation.

We found that intake decisions are not reviewed and approved by a supervisor. Intake decisions are only reviewed through intake case file reviews, which are not being performed, as discussed later. The fact that JPOs have sole discretion in making a decision concerning a juvenile offender does not appear to concern DJJ. This practice leaves DJJ open to public criticism and possible litigation. In a good internal control environment, significant decisions are reviewed by a supervisor and such review is documented.

3. Forms are not used

For the intake case files audited, the required forms were generally not used or not signed. The most important of these forms are:

Intake Determination Record and Plan. This form documents decisions made during the intake process and serves as a checklist to ensure that JPOs consider all options available for their determinations within the framework of restorative justice. This form was not used to its fullest extent to document the JPOs' determination process.

Advisement of Constitutional Rights. This form was frequently missing from the files. Policy requires the youth to be orally advised of his constitutional rights.[66] To minimize liability, however, a signed copy of this form should be maintained with each intake as evidence that the youth was properly informed.

One or both of the above forms were missing in almost 60% of the intakes tested.

Disclosure Criteria Checklist. This form is used to generate a public disclosure document concerning the juvenile and the case as required by Alaska Statutes.[67] In 37% of the referral cases tested, the form was not used.

4. No documented follow-up exists on assigned tasks

When processing an intake that a JPO has determined can be handled as an informal diversion, the JPO assigns any combination of corrective consequences including community work service, restitution, apology letters, topical classes, medical or psychological treatment, and substance abuse evaluation.

[65] As previously discussed, a JPO must decide what type of action to take in each case, ranging from dismissing the referral because of lack of evidence, to assigning an apology letter or community work service, to petitioning the courts to adjudicate the juvenile as a delinquent minor. Some aspects of the JPO's decision are based on meetings and interviews with the youth, parent(s), and/or victim(s); severity of the offense; prior offenses; and home situation.
[66] AS 47.12.040(a)(1) (Investigation and petition).
[67] AS 47.12.315 (Public disclosure of information in agency records relating to certain minors).

Approximately 18% of the referrals had no documentation in the case file or in the Juvenile Offender Management Information System (JOMIS)[68] that showed assigned consequences were completed. Part of the restorative justice method is for delinquents to promptly correct the negative situations they created. In addition, the percentage of community work service and restitution ordered and fulfilled is one of the five performance-based budgeting benchmarks used for reporting to the legislature. Without the necessary documentation, these benchmarks cannot be accurately reported to management and the legislature.

Component B: Probation Supervision

If the intake determination is either formal or informal supervision of the juvenile offender, a JPO then must monitor the juvenile under the terms and conditions of probation, rules of conduct, or other instructions. Under formal supervision, the terms are set by the court. Under informal supervision, they are set by the JPO with input from the juvenile offender, the juvenile's parent(s), or treatment counselors. The juvenile may not be in state custody while under informal supervision, but may be in custody while under formal supervision.

We found noncompliance with many of the probation services policies and procedures. The following is a discussion of six of the most significant areas with high rates of noncompliance:

1. Risk/Need Assessments are not performed

The Risk/Need Assessment worksheet is used to provide background for determining the severity of the case and for writing a predisposition report[69] for the court. It assists in establishing the supervision level and conditions of probation. Once a juvenile is under court-ordered probation, DJJ policy requires that a Risk/Need Assessment be updated every six months or upon the occurrence of certain events. Performing the reassessment allows a JPO to stay current with a case in terms of relevancy, circumstances, and events. In all four regions[70] at least 50% of the cases tested did not have a completed worksheet prior to preparation of the predisposition report; in at least 45% of the cases, no reassessment was performed.

[68] JOMIS is DJJ's new computer software used for juvenile case management. JOMIS has a module for entering chronological entries for case contacts. Chronological entries serve as a diary and are a source for understanding how a case has progressed and has been handled, as well as any other events that have occurred.
[69] A predisposition report contains factual information regarding the juvenile and the case, as well as an analysis of that information. It is used by the court to assist in selecting the most appropriate disposition for that case and is used by the division itself in case planning and treatment.
[70] The four regions are: northern, Anchorage, southcentral, and southeastern.

2. Predisposition reports are not timely

In about 25% of the cases tested, the predisposition reports were not distributed to the court, and all parties involved, ten days prior to the disposition hearing.[71] Predisposition reports provide the court with information to assist in selecting the most appropriate legal action to impose on the juvenile delinquent.

3. Case Plans are not maintained

After the court orders probation, a JPO writes a Case Plan.[72] Like a Risk/Need Assessment, a Case Plan provides a road map to ensure that a juvenile is receiving the proper services to minimize the risk of recidivism.

In 20% of the formal probation case files audited, a Case Plan was not signed by the juvenile or was never prepared.[73] A Case Plan is required to be written within two weeks of disposition; 50% of the cases did not meet that timeline.

One of the highest error rates, at 83%, resulted from JPOs' not reviewing Case Plans on a quarterly basis. This was a consistent problem among all four regions in the State. This review is documented by a JPO signing a Case Plan every three months. The dated signature indicates that aspects of the Case Plan are still relevant or have been performed. No supporting evidence suggested the reviews were being done, except in one region that attempted to have quarterly summaries of each case in the chronological notes.[74]

Certain events trigger the need for a Case Plan to be rewritten. In our tests 67% of the time, a Case Plan was not rewritten upon the occurrence of a qualifying event.[75]

4. Probation contact standards are not met

The primary requirement of probation is that juveniles maintain scheduled contacts with their JPO. Almost 75% of probation case files that were audited did not meet the contact

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[71] *Alaska Rules of Court*, Rule 22, and DJJ policy 3.1.3(g) require that the predisposition report be made available to the persons entitled to it at least ten days before the disposition hearing.

[72] All parties, including the juvenile and parent(s), help formulate specific achievable criteria to be met by the offender within a certain time frame. Types of probation criteria include maintaining employment, attending school, abiding by a curfew, following house rules, maintaining a C grade-point average, participating in treatment and counseling, completing assigned community work service, and paying ordered restitution.

[73] The Case Plan has signature blocks for the juvenile, parent(s), and JPO to sign. However, DJJ policy allows the JPO to proceed without the parental signature. Therefore, only those Case Plans without a juvenile's signature were considered errors during our testwork.

[74] This practice is not in policy and may not meet the policy purpose if there have been changes in the plan, as the revised plan must be signed by the juvenile and JPO. In addition, DJJ policy requires that a copy of the revised plan be given to the juvenile.

[75] DJJ policy 4.4.3(h) requires the Case Plan to be rewritten on a new form if the juvenile changes placement or has a new caregiver, or if major parts of the plan no longer are accurate or appropriate.

standards set by either the JPO or the court. When a juvenile does not maintain the predetermined contact interval, it is difficult for a JPO to determine if the juvenile is in compliance with the rest of the conditions of probation. This in turn inhibits the JPO's ability to make arrests for probation violations.

It is the responsibility of the JPO to investigate technical violations of probation, such as failure to show for scheduled visits with the JPO. Based on the investigation, the JPO, in consultation with a supervisor, must decide whether to address the violation with nonjudicial or judicial actions.

At the lowest level of supervision, a JPO must require contact with the juvenile once a month, with one contact per quarter being face-to-face, and a quarterly contact with a parent.[76] This does not appear to be an overly burdensome task, and yet many of the audited case files did not even document maintenance of this minimal level of contact.

5. No documented follow-up exists on assigned tasks

In probation cases, a JPO or court assigns the corrective consequences or tasks. These might include community work service, restitution, apology letter(s), treatment, and/or substance abuse evaluation. Approximately 33% of the case files audited had no documentation that assigned tasks were completed. This can be attributed to no follow-up by a JPO to ensure completion of assigned tasks. If so, the youths themselves are not being held accountable.

6. No documented basis exists for early discharge, and there are no closing summaries

For a probation case to be closed early, DJJ policy states that certain criteria must be met. In 31% of the cases that were discharged early, there was inadequate documentation to support the JPO's decision to close the case. Similarly, 40% of all closed cases that were tested did not contain a closing summary.[77]

As discussed above under Components A and B, JPOs do not comply with policies and procedures. Management has developed its policies to ensure the protection and restoration of victims and communities and to hold juvenile offenders accountable for their behavior. Therefore, management should ensure that JPOs comply with the division's policies in providing intake and probation supervision. (See Recommendation No. 13)

[76] Approximately 60% of the probation cases we tested had a probation level of minimum or medium. Medium-level probation calls for two face-to-face contacts per month, a quarterly contact with the parent(s), and a home visit every six months.

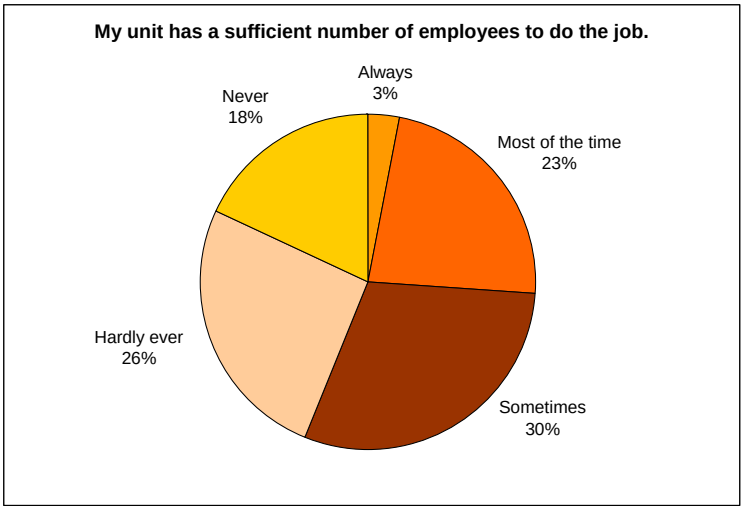
[77] A closing summary serves to recapitulate the events that transpired during the juvenile's probation period. It is useful in justifying why a juvenile may have been taken off probation early. A JPO can use a closing summary as a starting point to help determine what intake decision is appropriate to make for a reoffender. Documenting how a juvenile performed while on probation can be valuable information if the juvenile reoffends.

Absence of supervisory reviews hinders detection of noncompliance with policies and affects other management issues

Consistent periodic review of intake and probation cases provides supervisors and management with insight about problems and issues that may negatively affect the efficiency and effectiveness of services provided by JPOs. To ensure compliance with procedures and standards, policy states that intake and probation files should be reviewed by a JPO's immediate supervisor every quarter.[78] Case file reviews are also used to assess the JPOs' performance and abilities and whether appropriate services were delivered. These quarterly case file reviews are one of only three areas that provide evidence of supervisory involvement in the intake and probation cases.[79]

Exhibit 13

Current JPO Employee Responses



Our audit of case file review sheets[80] for FY 02 and the first two quarters of FY 03 showed that both intake and probation case file reviews by supervisory staff are not being performed in accordance with DJJ's policy. In fact, several offices did not perform either type of review during the six quarters. Overall, there is considerable room for improvement in ensuring that case reviews are performed as required. (See Recommendation No. 14)

Workload contributes to policy noncompliance

There may be many reasons why JPOs do not comply with division policies. The results of an employee survey showed that 44% of JPOs believe staff levels in their units often are inadequate. (See Exhibit 13) In the opinion of the responding JPOs, additional probation officer and administrative/clerical positions are needed the most.

[78] The restorative justice statute enacted by the 1998 legislative session (AS 47.12.010 (b)(14)) states that one of the purposes of the chapter is to "*review and evaluate regularly and independently the effectiveness of programs and services . . . .*"

[79] The two other areas where documentation of supervisory involvement is necessary are the signature of an on-call JPO approving a detention request and the signature of a supervisory JPO on a predisposition report submitted to the courts.

[80] A case file review sheet lists each case that was reviewed by a JPO's supervisor and the results in a short yes/no format.

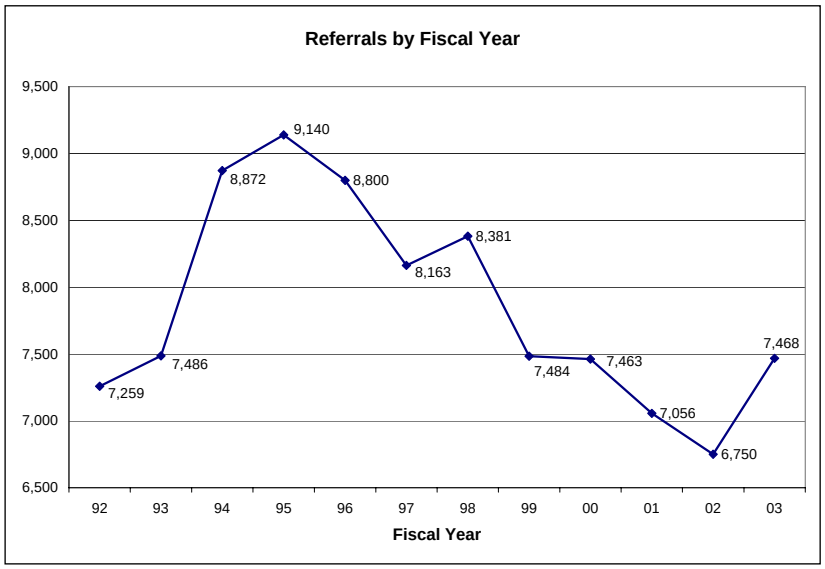
Also, 49% of responding JPOs reported that they feel the quality of their work suffers because of an unreasonable workload. Further, 54% of the JPOs reported working more than 37.5 hours a week but less than 50 hours, while 21% reported working more than 50 hours a week.

Management information system is not always accurate

Both intake and probation case files were tested for completeness and accuracy of case data within JOMIS. In terms of completeness, not all data was entered into JOMIS in about 19% of the case files. For example, community work service and restitution existed in the physical probation case files as being court- or JPO-ordered; however, the data was not entered in JOMIS.[81] Other types of data had similar results. Data recorded in JOMIS was inaccurate in 6% of the intake and probation cases reviewed.

Because it could not rely on the data, DJJ did not use JOMIS-generated data for reporting its performance measures[82] to the Alaska State Legislature.[83] Clerical staff tracks performance-measure data internally using Excel for the annual reports. Due to this additional manual manipulation of the data, the degree of completeness and accuracy may be diminished.

Exhibit 14—Number of Referrals Received by Fiscal Year (unaudited)



Analyses of juvenile crime statistics by management are deemed reasonable

As noted in Exhibit 14,[84] FY 95 had the peak number of referrals received by DJJ since FY 92. In early FY 96, alcohol offenses by minors were removed from DJJ's jurisdiction and assigned to the district courts.[85] This change in the law could explain an initial decrease in referral

[81] DJJ converted to its new management information system, JOMIS, in April 2002. Some items did not convert directly from its old system. However, we also analyzed the details of cases after implementation of JOMIS and still found missing data.

[82] One of the five performance measures reported to the legislature included the percentages of ordered community work service and restitution that were completed.

[83] State of Alaska, Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Juvenile Justice, *Annual Report, Fiscal Year 2003*, Appendix A.

[84] For accuracy, we used the most recent annual report that had data for any fiscal year. FY 92-93 data is from the FY 99 report; FY 94-98 information is from the FY 00 report; FY 99 data is from the FY 99 report; FY 00 is from the FY 01 report; and FY 01-03 data is from the FY 03 report.

[85] AS 47.12.030 lists several offenses that, if committed by a minor, will be processed as if the offender were an adult. These offenses relate to motor vehicles, tobacco, fish and game, parks and recreation, and alcohol. In addition,

numbers. However, DJJ did not publish annual reports for FY 96 or FY 97, so management's analysis of the decrease is not available. Then, in FY 98, further amendments to the statute, which removed some additional juvenile crimes from the jurisdiction of the juvenile justice system, may have contributed to the further reduction in referral statistics.

In the annual reports for FY 98 through FY 00, DJJ reported declines in the referral rate. DJJ attributed the decrease to a national trend; statutory changes; increased community outreach by administrative and probation services staff; and growth in partner initiatives such as youth courts, rural community court agreements, and aftercare programs. In its FY 01 annual report, DJJ stated that the reasons for the continued referral decline were

> *. . . unknown and probably complicated—influenced by demographic changes, economic trends, and more. In some communities the decreases are probably due to the fact that overburdened law enforcement officers simply don't have time to investigate and refer less serious crimes.*

Effective July 1, 2001, Alaska Statute changes related to habitual consumption of alcohol by minors returned jurisdiction to DJJ.[86] DJJ did not publish an annual report for FY 02, so there is no published management analysis of the continued decline in referrals for that year.

However, in the FY 03 annual report, data showed that referrals increased by 11% from FY 02. DJJ reported that the largest increase was in the number of serious felony charges committed by juveniles. Management expressed concerns about not being able to address serious crime referrals in a timely manner, not being able to adequately supervise serious offenders, and not being able to provide more than minimal attention to minor crime offenders in a timely and consistent manner.

We believe that the reported statistics, and management's discussion of those statistics, provide useful, although imperfect, information to the legislature. Availability of data and improvements in reporting accuracy should occur when JOMIS is fully implemented.

<u>New offenses are committed by juveniles while on probation</u>

There were 2,537 juveniles on probation at some time during FY 02. These juveniles had 1,075 (42%) new referrals from law enforcement agencies or JPOs for offenses committed by them while on probation. In FY 03, there were 4,067 juveniles on probation during the fiscal year. Of these juveniles, 1,449 (36%) had new referrals.

Alaska Statutes[87] and division policy[88] provide that a JPO is not expected to formally involve the court system if the public will be protected without court involvement. As a result, many

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it includes these more serious offenses: felony crime against a person, first-degree arson, and felony crime against a person utilizing a deadly weapon.

[86] AS 47.12.030 (Provisions inapplicable) places minors receiving their third or more minor consuming alcohol offense within DJJ's jurisdiction to be processed according to AS 04.16.050 (Possession, control, or consumption by persons under the age of 21).

probation violations do not proceed beyond a discussion between the JPO and juvenile, which may or may not be documented. Therefore, the only data available from DJJ related to new offenses committed by juveniles on probation are those that result in the filing of a new referral with DJJ.

Forty-eight percent of the probation files that were reviewed had varying degrees of probation violations. Actual arrests were made by JPOs in 11 (26%) of the cases. In only 5 of the 42 instances of probation violations did a JPO consider the violation significant enough to petition the court to address it.

Of the 1,449 referrals for new offenses that took place during FY 03,[89] 574 listed DJJ as the referring agency. The remaining 875 were referred by law enforcement agencies.

JPOs' readiness to restrain and arrest offenders is on the decline

The readiness of JPOs to physically restrain and arrest offenders appears generally adequate. Further, JPOs can go in pairs to arrest juveniles and can request additional assistance from law enforcement officers if determined necessary.

However, the JPOs' readiness to restrain, arrest, or manage juveniles appropriately may be decreasing. The training records of JPOs for FY 01, FY 02, and FY 03 indicate that minimum training levels required by DJJ policy are not being maintained. The percentage of JPOs who received the minimum 40 hours of training was 64%, 60%, and 38% for each respective fiscal year.[90] The required 40 hours of training must include instruction in physical and nonphysical intervention and arrest procedures. The percentage of JPOs who received this specific training was 72% in FY 01, 31% in FY 02, and 37% in FY 03. (See Recommendation No. 15)

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[87] AS 47.12.010 (b) (10) (Goals and purposes of chapter).
[88] *Youth Corrections, Field Policy and Procedure Manual*, 2.1.2.
[89] DJJ converted to its new management information system, JOMIS, in April 2002; the old and new systems did not share all the same fields for data collection. Therefore, data related to the referring agency is only available for FY 03.
[90] If applicable, hire and separation dates were taken into account to determine if it was possible for a JPO to receive the required 40 hours of training in each fiscal year.

DJJ EMPLOYEE DISCIPLINE

We audited the DJJ investigative and employee disciplinary actions for instances that occurred at the Johnson Youth Center[91] (JYC) located in Juneau.

We conclude the following:

- JYC resident-restraint and resident-management techniques practiced by some employees are inappropriate
- DJJ policies and procedures for reporting instances of abuse and neglect of residents are inconsistent among youth facilities
- Training in the recognition and reporting of abuse and neglect of youth-facility residents is not provided

These findings are discussed in detail below.

<u>JYC resident-restraint and resident-management techniques practiced by some employees are inappropriate</u>

Based on a review of internal administrative investigative reports,[92] during FY 97 and again throughout much of FY 02, inappropriate resident-restraint and resident-management techniques were practiced by some employees at the Johnson Youth Center. The techniques used included verbal, emotional, and physical abuse of residents, especially while they were under mechanical restraint.

These techniques were contrary to JYC's written policies and procedures and staff training for managing uncooperative or aggressive residents. The techniques and philosophies adopted by DJJ and JYC into policy are those of the Mandt System®[93] for managing aggressive people. This system emphasizes using techniques to diminish aggressive behavior while treating each individual resident or group of residents with dignity and respect. The Mandt System® views the use of physical restraints as an indicator of treatment failure, not treatment. Therefore, the policy of both DJJ and JYC states, "*Mechanical restraints are to be used only when necessary for the protection of the resident, staff, property, or the public.*"

DJJ senior management investigated this intentional disregard for policies and procedures. In both FY 97 and FY 02, the management[94] and staff at JYC were instructed by the DJJ senior

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[91] JYC is a 28-bed youth facility with 8 detention beds and 20 treatment beds.

[92] Alaska Statute 39.25.080 provides for the confidentiality of personnel documents. Reports on administrative investigations of employees are considered personnel documents. Therefore, the details of such reports cannot be disclosed.

[93] The Mandt System® is a systematic training program for behavior interactions developed by David H. Mandt Sr. The training program teaches graduated alternatives to be used by facility staff when encountering aggressive or uncooperative behavior among its clients.

[94] JYC is managed by a superintendent and two unit leaders, one each for the detention and treatment units.

management to utilize the techniques for resident restraint and resident management in accordance with policy.

DJJ's director[95] took employee disciplinary actions[96] in FY 97 and FY 02. These disciplinary actions were consistent with other substantiated cases involving client abuse during the same period. However, the employee disciplinary actions related to the FY 97 instances were significantly reduced through negotiations between the employees and the Department of Administration and the Department of Law as part of grievance and litigation settlements.

<u>DJJ policies and procedures for reporting instances of abuse and neglect of residents are inconsistent among youth facilities</u>

Alaska Statute 47.17.020, *Persons required to report*, states:

> *(a) The following persons who, in the performance of their occupational duties . . . have reasonable cause to suspect that a child has suffered harm as a result of child abuse or neglect shall immediately report the harm to the nearest office of the department* [Department of Health and Social Services]*: . . .*
>
> (4) *administrative officers of institutions; . . .*

This statute applies to each of the superintendents of the State's youth facilities. Each of the eight youth facilities has established its own policy and procedure manual. Consequently, some policies and procedures are not consistent among facilities. (See Recommendation No. 16)

<u>Training in the recognition and reporting of abuse and neglect of youth-facility residents is not provided</u>

In 1986, the legislature enacted law that requires training in the recognition and reporting of child abuse and neglect for state employees and certain public school employees.

DJJ has not established a training program for recognition and reporting of child abuse as part of its formal training curriculum. The Ketchikan Regional Youth Facility, on its own initiative, recently held a training course that met some of the requirements of AS 47.17.022.

The DHSS commissioner should ensure that the department provides training as required by AS 47.17.022 to DJJ employees who are required to report abuse and neglect of the children under their custody. (See Recommendation No. 17)

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[95] In FY 97, DJJ was not a separate division and was under the Division of Youth and Family Services. At that time, the senior manager over all state youth facilities was the youth administrator.

[96] Documents related to employee disciplinary actions are considered confidential personnel documents under AS 38.25.080. Details of such actions cannot be disclosed.

MANAGEMENT TRAVEL

We audited various issues related to senior management travel at the DHSS commissioner's office, DFYS, and DJJ.

We conclude the following:

- Assigned duty stations are appropriate, but some travel is not clearly necessary for state business
- Costs related to personal deviations are not borne by employees
- Alternative technologies to travel have not been considered
- The need for multiple employees' attendance at events is questionable
- Discount airline fares rarely are utilized
- Travel approval is not in accordance with state law and policies

These findings are discussed in detail below.

<u>Assigned duty stations are appropriate, but some travel is not clearly necessary for state business</u>

We reviewed the appropriateness of assigned duty stations in FY 02 for the 20 management employees. A commissioner and a director, with Juneau as their assigned duty station, also had residences in other Alaskan cities, and their spouses lived at those residences. The administrative policy[97] for determining a duty station states:

> *The duty station of a traveler is the city, town, or village, or within a 50-mile radius thereof, where the traveler spends the major portion of the working time. . . .*

Both the commissioner and director spent less than 50% of their working time at the locations of their other residences. Therefore, their assigned duty station, Juneau, was appropriate and in accordance with the policy. However, what is not clear is whether their travel to the areas of their other residences was in the best interest of the State. Alaska Statute 39.20.140 (a) states:

> *The Department of Administration may not pay an official or employee for per diem or transportation costs unless the travel is clearly necessary to benefit the state.*

[97] Alaska Administrative Manual, section 60.020.

Exhibit 15 provides highlights of 3 trips with costs totaling about $2,700 that were not clearly beneficial for the State. The costs related to 12 similarly questioned trips totaled approximately $9,100.

Exhibit 15

State-Paid Trips that Appear Personal in Nature

Commissioner's Trips to Fairbanks

- **January 2001 –** The commissioner had plans to attend meetings in Fairbanks and Kenai. The original plan was to fly to Fairbanks Monday morning and then to Kenai Tuesday morning to attend a similar meeting. However the commissioner had a family emergency in Fairbanks and left early on Saturday and cancelled the Kenai portion of the trip. The commissioner attended the meeting in Fairbanks Monday morning then took personal leave for the rest of that day and Tuesday. The State paid the airfare and car rental for two days. (See Subsequent Events on page 55)
- **May 2001 –** The commissioner traveled to Fairbanks for two events and other business on Monday. Business in Fairbanks concluded on Wednesday. On Thursday the commissioner flew to Anchorage for a half day of business. However, instead of continuing to Juneau, the commissioner returned to Fairbanks until Sunday.

Director's Trips to Anchorage Area

- **May 2002 –** A director flew to Anchorage on a Thursday morning and stayed in a hotel that night. The purpose of the trip was to attend the groundbreaking ceremony at the Kenai Youth Facility. Instead, he canceled the flight to Kenai and stayed in the Anchorage area from Friday to Tuesday, not in a hotel. No explanation was noted on the travel authorization (TA) for the change in plans.

A review of the time spent by the commissioner and director at their other residential locations showed a higher percentage of time spent than their successors. We also compared the percentage of in-state trips that included weekends with trips by other management employees.

Exhibit 16 shows the percentage of time spent by the commissioner in Fairbanks, compared with her successors.

Exhibit 17 on the following page shows the percentage of time spent by the director in the Anchorage area, compared with his successor. (Note: The director's position was vacant for 7.5 months in 2003.)

Exhibit 16

Percentage of Time Spent by Commissioners in Fairbanks

Fiscal Years	2001	2002	2003	2004
Commissioner				
Number of Months in Position	12.0	3.5		
Percentage of Time Spent in Fairbanks	9%	34%		
Commissioner Successor (1)				
Number of Months in Position		8.5	5.0	
Percentage of Time Spent in Fairbanks		0%	4%	
Commissioner Successor (2)				
Number of Months in Position			7.0	5.0
Percentage of Time Spent in Fairbanks			2%	1%

The commissioner and director included weekends with their FY 02 in-state travel 37% and 63% of the time, respectively. In contrast, other senior management under review only included weekends in their in-state travel about 5% of the time.

It appears that, even under the new administration, there may be marginal or unnecessary travel by individuals whose duty station is Juneau and who have residences in other areas of the State.

Exhibit 17

Percentage of Time Spent by Director in Anchorage Area			
	2002	**2003**	**2004**
Director			
Number of Months in Position	12.0		
Percentage of Time Spent in Anchorage Area	37%		
Director Successor			
Number of Months in Position		4.5	5.0
Percentage of Time Spent in Anchorage Area		6%	6%

The FY 03 in-state travel of management employees in similar positions was analyzed. Two deputy commissioners based in Juneau with second residences in the Anchorage area generally took longer trips to Anchorage. They also spent more weekends in Anchorage than those without residences in the area.

In particular, the average rate of weekend stays for the FY 03 management employees without Anchorage residences was 20%, compared with 81% for those with Anchorage residences. Further, management employees without Anchorage residences on average took one- or two-day trips, whereas those with Anchorage area residences took four- or five-day trips. One of the deputy commissioners with an Anchorage area residence took three nine-day trips to Anchorage to attend meetings.

We recognize that these travelers cannot receive lodging or weekend-meal per diem. However, this does not justify, and should not be used to rationalize, travel that is otherwise marginal or unnecessary. Accordingly, those who travel to their second residence at state expense are viewed with a higher degree of skepticism. Management employees' unfairly benefiting at the State's expense, whether in fact or appearance, may undermine public confidence and employee morale.

<u>Costs related to personal deviations are not borne by employees</u>

Alaska Administrative Manual (AAM) 60.050 states:

> *Any interruption or deviation from the most direct and efficient means of travel for traveler convenience requires, at a minimum, prior approval at the agency level by the appropriate supervisor or designee. Any additional time or expense resulting from an interruption or deviation for traveler convenience shall be borne solely by the traveler.*

We tested a total of 199 travel authorizations[98] (TAs) for FY 01 and FY 02. Thirteen indicated the traveler took personal leave time in conjunction with the business trip. We noted five instances when the management employees took personal time during trips without claiming personal leave for the time taken. There were 115 hours of unreported leave

[98] This is the form used to document estimated costs for preapproval and actual costs incurred after travel.

in FY 01 and FY 02, valued at approximately $5,000. One individual had unreported leave for three of the instances, valued at about $3,800. This individual admitted not reporting leave taken while on a trip outside the United States and now regrets not properly reporting the hours.

In addition, one official requested and was paid per diem, totaling $294, for seven personal leave days taken while in travel status for state business. The personal leave was properly recorded in the payroll system. However, the management employee did not attach copies of the leave slips to the final TA for settlement and should not have claimed per diem for those days on the TA.

In our review of FY 03 TAs, no instances of abuse related to personal leave during travel were noted. However, we did find four instances when there were personal deviations in the travel. Only one had documentation of a cost comparison to show there were no additional costs to the State for the travel deviation.[99]

Management employees should obtain preapproval of travel deviations for personal convenience and be required to report any related personal leave taken. A cost comparison with and without the deviations should be documented prior to preapproval. Any additional expenses due to deviations should be borne by the traveler.

Alternative technologies to travel have not been considered

State and department policies[100] require individuals requesting and approving travel to ensure that travel is clearly necessary and to fully consider other alternatives, such as videoconferencing and teleconferencing, when evaluating the necessity for travel. Although satisfactory alternatives are generally available, they are neither routinely nor carefully considered by management when planning travel.

- A total of 253 TAs[101] for the Office of the Commissioner, DFYS, and DJJ senior management were tested. Only one TA showed that the traveler considered and documented why an alternative to traveling was not a satisfactory option.
- While on travel status in Anchorage, one management employee took a day trip to Homer to attend a meeting. The decision to attend required extending his stay in Anchorage and changing his ticket. These changes added another $550 to the cost of the originally preapproved trip. When asked if he was required to attend, he stated that he was, but that whether he attended personally or by teleconference was at his discretion.
- TAs with same-day or next-day return travel, primarily to attend meetings, were reviewed to determine the frequency of such short trips. We noted that 56%, 47%, and 44%, respectively, of the FY 01, FY 02, and FY 03 trips were for these short durations.

[99] Based on our review, the other three trips did not appear to have caused the State to incur any additional expenses.
[100] AS 39.20.140(a) and DHSS policy 640(C).
[101] The samples of TAs numbered 33, 166, and 54 from FY 01, FY 02, and FY 03, respectively.

Funding allocations for field office staff[102] travel at DFYS and DJJ are steadily decreasing. If field supervisors are expected to perform supervision and reviews of cases by telephone and email, it seems reasonable that management could attend or conduct many of its meetings through videoconferencing or teleconferencing.

The need for multiple employees' attendance at events is questionable

DHSS travel authorizations are processed through one of two offices of the Division of Administrative Services, [103] either the one in Anchorage or the one in Juneau. We reviewed the FY 02 travel logs for all DHSS employees and board/committee members whose travel was processed by the Juneau office. In addition, we reviewed DJJ employee travel from Anchorage, and DFYS employee travel from southcentral, Anchorage, and northern regional locations processed by the Anchorage Division of Administrative Services (DAS) office.

There were at least 206[104] instances with multiple attendees at the same event. Fifty-four of these were for events occurring in other states, with no fewer than 2 attendees at each event and, on average, 5 attendees.[105] Three of these out-of-state events had more than 15 attendees each.

The 206 instances also included 42 face-to-face management meetings by DHSS divisions. DFYS and DJJ each had 6 such meetings in FY 02. Further analysis of one DFYS quarterly supervisors' meeting determined that there were 24 attendees and that the total cost of the meeting was approximately $16,000.

DHSS management should ensure that travel for multiple-attendee meetings and conferences clearly is necessary to benefit the State and that videoconferencing or teleconferencing is considered as an alternative for some, or all, potential attendees.

The appropriateness of persons' attendance at meetings was also considered. In several instances, administrative employees attended program-training meetings and conferences. For instance, the DFYS supervisors' meeting had 17 social workers from regional and field offices in attendance. In addition, 5 central office administrative employees attended: the director, the management systems manager, the field operations liaison, a program officer, and the administrative manager. The meeting was primarily training for the social workers. Also, a demonstration on DFYS' new computerized case-management system was presented by the systems manager.

If administrative employees need to make a presentation for the attending staff, perhaps this type of presentation could be videoconferenced or teleconferenced to decrease travel costs.

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[102] The field office staff referred to are social workers and juvenile probation officers.
[103] This division is now called Finance and Management Services.
[104] All travel logs for DHSS were not included in the review, so more instances of multiple attendances at events may have occurred during FY 02.
[105] The number of attendees may have been higher if all travel logs for DHSS had been included.

Discount airline fares rarely are utilized

State policy[106] directs travelers to purchase discounted airfares whenever possible. Yet most airfare purchases for the 46 management employees under review were at the higher, unrestricted rate that does not provide any price discounts. Unrestricted airfares do not require advance ticketing, they are fully refundable, and changes may be made without penalties. Restricted tickets may be changed for a fee, and the ticket cost cannot be refunded; however, the price of such tickets is, generally, significantly lower than unrestricted fares.

According to a prior commissioner who purchased 85% of her FY 01 and FY 02 airline tickets within less than seven days of departure, the administrative staff believes discounted airfares are too restrictive to accommodate top management's busy schedules. Schedules have to remain flexible in case a more important event arises. However, we disagree. The need to purchase airfares at a premium should be the exception, not the norm.

Such practices were not limited to the above-mentioned prior commissioner. Seventy-seven percent of the tickets purchased by other management for travel in FY 02 were purchased less than two weeks in advance. Sixty-five percent of FY 03 travel was purchased in the same manner.

The discounts for airfare purchased between 7 and 13 days prior to travel are approximately 14%, while tickets purchased 14 days or more before travel receive about a 68% discount. The total cost of airfare for all TAs reviewed was $120,367. When the discounts are applied to the airfare costs, the savings could have been between $8,675 and $59,930.

We recognize that some nondiscounted purchases are unavoidable; sometimes upper management may be required to attend a press conference, interview, or meeting at short notice. But the majority of travel we reviewed was to attend trainings, presentations, conventions, regularly scheduled meetings, and other planned functions. Too often, the department is paying a premium because of poor trip planning and reluctance to purchase discounted fares.

Travel approval is not in accordance with state law and policies

We reviewed 199 TAs for FY 01 and FY 02 travel. In addition, we selected 54 TAs from FY 03 for review. The following are the areas of noncompliance noted:

Improper preapproval of travel

According to AAM 60.030:

> *All official travel shall be authorized and approved in advance . . . . The request for approval shall be in writing and must document essentials of the*

[106] AAM 60.070 and DHSS policy 640.

travel including purpose, destination, dates, estimated costs, any related leave requests, approval for a rental car for business purposes . . . .

Forty-six percent of the FY 01 and FY 02 TAs were not preapproved in accordance with policies. Preapproval documentation did not fully disclose travel costs, causing an average of 41% understatement of the estimated cost of travel. Travel approvals were received in many instances after purchase of the airline ticket or even after the travel started. These problems were also found in the review of FY 03 TAs, resulting in 61% of those TAs not being properly preapproved.

Inadequate documentation

Seventeen percent of the FY 01 and FY 02 TAs did not have required documentation.[107] Missing documentation included the absence of cost comparisons for personal deviations in travel; lack of evidence of the reissue or refund of the airline ticket when trips were canceled; and missing invoices for airfare, car rentals, and other travel costs. In FY 03, the percentage of noncompliance was significantly reduced, to less than 5%.

Processing delays

Eighty-four percent of the FY 01 and FY 02 TAs reviewed were not processed in a timely manner.[108] The review of the FY 03 TAs indicated a similar rate of 87%. The reasons for untimely processing were travelers' delays in submitting their TAs to DAS staff and delays in the final settlement of the TAs by DAS staff.

Refer to Recommendation No. 18 for further discussion of the compliance weaknesses discussed in this section of the report.

SUBSEQUENT EVENTS

Subsequent to our audit of management travel, the Department of Administration (DOA) began implementing a new approach to managing state government travel as of January 1, 2005.[109] A State Travel Office (STO) has been established within DOA. The responsibilities of STO will be to price and book travel arrangements and to process the actual costs of the travel for final settlement after the travel has occurred.

The responsibilities for preapprovals and approvals of final settlements will remain with the departments and the Office of the Governor. However, this is an opportune time to clarify and strengthen the policies and procedures related to preapprovals, personal deviations while

[107] AAM 60.050, 60.180, and 60.270.

[108] AAM 60.270 requires the submission of a final TA within five business days of the completion of a trip. If the traveler is due an additional amount, the payment shall be made within ten business days of receipt of a properly completed TA.

[109] Portions of DHSS started utilizing the STO in January 2005. The remaining portions of DHSS are expected to be added by the end of June 2005.

on state business, leave usage while in travel status, use of alternative technologies to travel, and limitation of multiple attendees at events. It is anticipated that STO will assist the State in obtaining discount airfares and will diminish processing delays. (See Recommendation No. 19 for further discussion)

Commissioner's Travel Update

The former commissioner recognizes that the January 2001 trip discussed in detail in the audit report (page 49) is a blur of state and personal business. As a result, the commissioner intends to reimburse the state for the costs associated with that trip. This action is consistent with the commissioner's previous action of taking personal leave for most of that trip to avoid any questions about using state resources for personal business.

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FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Throughout the Report Conclusions section, we refer to the Division of Family and Youth Services (DFYS), the entity that was audited. However, recommendations in the Findings and Recommendations section will be made to the Office of Children's Services (OCS) in recognition of the current organizational structure. The Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) did not undergo any organizational change.

DFYS AND DJJ PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT ISSUES

Recommendation No. 1

The Office of Children's Services (OCS) deputy commissioner and the Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) director should address employee concerns related to the operation and management of their respective divisions.

Both OCS and DJJ experience problems with managing staff, workloads, and program operations that result in high turnover. Respondents to the survey have identified areas of concern relating to human resources, management, supervision, and training. These include but are not limited to lack of evaluations, an inefficient hiring process, insufficient communication, an imbalanced allocation of workload and human resources, and the need for additional employee training.

The OCS deputy commissioner and DJJ director should periodically review their management practices and operations and the effect they have on staff. Available tools—such as exit interviews, stakeholder interviews, and employee suggestions—can be used to identify areas that need improvement.

For the time being, the divisions should use an impartial middleman, such as an internal auditor or a special assistant, for employees to contact and convey their ideas, suggestions, and concerns regarding the department and the divisions. An intermediary is considered necessary because of the overwhelming fears expressed to us about retaliation, intimidation, and blackballing by management. (See Recommendation No. 2 for further detail)

After a more solid working relationship has been established between management and staff, an in-house process can be established to encourage, gather, and earnestly consider employees' ideas and concerns.

Recommendation No. 2

The Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) commissioner should ensure that his managers at OCS and DJJ have the necessary skills and training to provide a positive work environment for their staffs.

In addition to having concerns with managerial oversight of certain processes as discussed above, employees are intimidated and demoralized by certain managers and supervisors' delivery of management oversight. Also, due to high turnover some management employees have been promoted before attaining the necessary managerial skills.

The control environment[110] sets the "tone from the top" for the divisions. Based on interviews with stakeholders and employees and comments from the survey, the control environment at OCS and DJJ is not a positive one. Management skills, styles, and attitudes are detrimental to employee morale and do not generate respect.

As mentioned by some survey respondents, low morale, stress, and lack of respect for upper-level management are a few of the various reasons for high employee turnover at OCS and DJJ. They are the result of management that does not effect a positive work environment. Poor management appears to have evolved from inexperienced supervisory and management staff, micro-management, cronyism, a poor work ethic, and a feeling of general disinterest.

Because of the high turnover, employees may be promoted into management and supervisory positions before they have the necessary training and experience. The social worker III and juvenile probation officer III designations could be developed into formal management tracks with specific training, mentors, or apprenticeships. This would help ensure that new supervisors and managers receive the basic management skills needed to grow into positive, effective, and knowledgeable upper-level managers. Trained, sophisticated managers are necessary to produce a positive control environment. Change will not occur overnight.

Recommendation No. 3

The DHSS commissioner and OCS deputy commissioner should review the effects of the methods used to implement the social worker licensure requirement.

As of December 31, 2003, only 39 out of 154 (25%) active social workers employed at OCS were licensed. Of those 39, only 7 were hired after the requirement for licensure of social workers was implemented on July 1, 2001.[111] The division has a Recruitment and Retention

[110] The control environment is the collective effect of factors such as management's philosophy and operating style, organizational structure, methods of assigning authority and responsibility, and personnel policies and practices.

[111] We compared the last pay period of FY 03 (June 16, 2003 - June 30, 2003) with the last pay period in FY 00 (June 16, 2000 - June 30, 2000), the fiscal year ending prior to implementation of social worker licensure. Additional social workers could have been hired between July 1, 2000, and June 15, 2003, but terminated employment prior to June 15, 2003, and therefore were excluded from our computations.

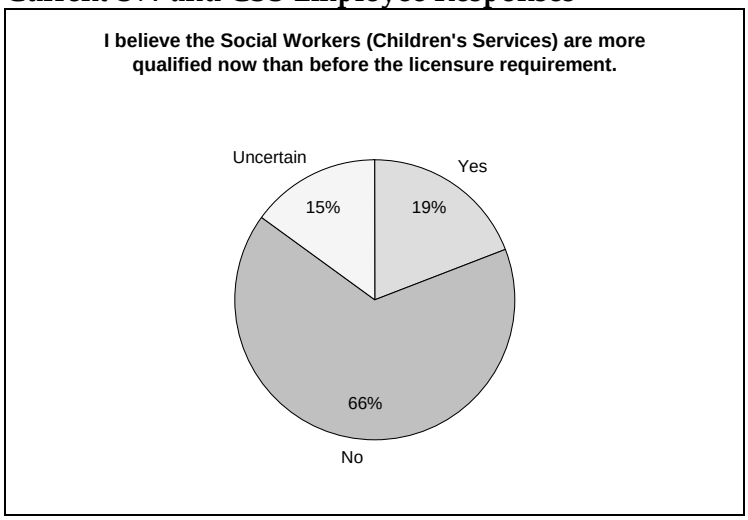
Stipend Program (stipend program) through the University of Alaska Anchorage and the University of Alaska Fairbanks, but has neither effectively recruited nor retained licensed social workers using that program.

One of the goals of the stipend program was to expand the pool of licensed social workers. However, at the beginning of FY 02 the stipend agreements were revised to add the social services associate, children's services specialist, and community care licensing specialist job classes, which do not require licensure, as eligible positions for stipend recipient employment. This change in the stipend agreements further limited OCS' pool of licensed social workers because recipients often did not finish the courses required to be licensed, but still qualified for the funding and a job with the division. It appears that the program has not been operated effectively by OCS, since it has neither succeeded in providing a larger pool of licensed social workers nor recovered stipend monies from participants who did not complete the program.

The total number of licensed staff employed in the social worker (SW) job class for all departments within the State of Alaska is low. (See Appendix F) Only 41 out of 204 (20%) SW positions were filled, statewide, by licensed social workers. The remaining SWs were grandfathered in to their positions by statute. Although the majority of the SW positions are within OCS, even on a statewide government basis the licensure requirement is making it hard to fill the positions.

Exhibit 18

Current SW and CSS Employee Responses



The social worker licensure requirement was an attempt by the legislature to improve the qualifications of people who call themselves social workers and to provide "title restriction" for those professionals. Since implementation of the requirement, OCS has made an effort to recruit, hire, and retain licensed social workers; however, only 25% of the division's SWs are licensed.

As noted in the Report Conclusions section, it does not appear to make a difference in job assignments whether an employee is licensed or not. All of the licensed social workers and the unlicensed children's services specialists follow the same policies and procedures, which do not establish a difference in the work performed by a licensed or an unlicensed employee. Further, only 19% of the social worker and children's services specialist respondents combined believe that the social workers are more qualified now than before the social worker licensure requirement. (See Exhibit 18)

We concur with the department's analysis in its December 26, 2001, social worker study, which states:

> *The requirement for a specific degree and licensure makes the job standards for social workers more stringent than any other in the job family. . . . There are no allowable experience or educational substitutions for the required education. A license is mandatory to attain and retain a position as a social worker, and must be achieved prior to employment.*

Two years after the study was conducted, the social worker licensure requirement is still a barrier to recruitment and employment. Although the division has utilized various recruitment tools, such as out-of-state recruitment and the stipend program, to hire licensed social workers, it has not been successful. While we believe the concept of an all-licensed workforce is a good one, it does not appear to be achievable within a short period of time without offering more financial incentives to current and potential employees.

It probably has not been long enough since the implementation of the social worker licensure requirement to *"determine if the administration's policy shift to licensed social workers was realistic and practical in Alaska,"* as presented in the audit request approved by the Legislative Budget and Audit Committee. It may take several more years to determine if the policy is feasible in Alaska.

However, two individuals who have the same job responsibilities and caseloads should not be paid on a different pay scale. In order to achieve parity between what has developed into two distinct job classes performing the same job at different pay levels, we recommend that management resolve the issue.

Recommendation No. 4

The OCS deputy commissioner should monitor the Recruitment and Retention Stipend Program more closely.

The goal of the stipend program established in the fall of 1998 was to enhance the experience and professionalism of OCS employees and to expand the pool of qualified social workers available to work in child welfare. (See Appendix E for further detail)

The *2003 IV-E Stipend Program Report* identified that OCS supported 48 students in the Bachelor of Social Work program between 1998 and 2003. Only 11 of the 24 stipend recipients who chose to work at OCS after they finished school were still employed as social workers at OCS as of December 31, 2003.[112] (See Exhibit 19 on the next page)

[112] According to OCS management, seven stipend recipients were not eligible for hire because they were *"not a good fit for employment"* or had quit the program prior to graduation.

Exhibit 19

Stipend Student Recipient Employment Information 1998 – 2003				
University Location	Student Recipients	Eligible for Hire	Hired	Current OCS Social Workers
Anchorage	26	22	11	6
Fairbanks	22	19	13	5
Total	48	41	24	11

Additionally, OCS did not offer 17 eligible stipend recipients (41%) employment upon graduation. According to the terms of the stipend agreement, the division has two months after graduation to offer the recipients employment. OCS does not adequately monitor the program to ensure that positions are available when the stipend recipients apply for them. As a result, the division loses the opportunity to hire qualified social workers, and it loses the money spent on the program participants.

The legislature has appropriated $1.4 million to the stipend program between FY 99 and FY 04. (See Exhibit 20) In order to enable the State to receive the best return on its investment, we recommend screening students prior to awarding admittance, ensuring that positions will be available upon a student's graduation, monitoring job applications to determine if the recipients have applied for positions with OCS, and offering the positions in a timely manner.

Exhibit 20

Budgeted Stipend Program Amount Summary (FY 99 – FY 04)							
Stipend Allocation	**FY 99**	**FY 00**	**FY 01**	**FY 02**	**FY 03**	**FY 04**	**Total**
Employees	$88,200	$88,200	$88,200	$56,297	$64,096	$35,459	$420,452
Students	48,000	48,068	48,030	42,000	42,500	49,250	$277,848
Subtotal	136,200	136,268	136,230	98,297	106,596	84,709	$698,300
Student Overhead	37,700	55,281	44,281	44,281	25,365	25,365	$232,273
University Match	108,600	85,740	91,891	92,467	89,937	83,428	$552,063
Total	**$282,500**	**$277,289**	**$272,402**	**$235,045**	**$221,898**	**$193,502**	**$1,482,636**

Recommendation No. 5

Department of Administration (DOA), Division of Personnel, should provide ongoing training for supervisors on performance evaluations.

The human resources staff assigned to OCS and DJJ does not monitor employee evaluations to ensure that evaluations are written in a timely manner and are complete and that merit increases are awarded when required. According to the department's policies and procedures, written performance evaluations are required annually for all permanent employees.

During October 2003, all agency human resources staff and activities were integrated into DOA, Division of Personnel. OCS and DJJ still rely on their assigned human resources section to perform duties in accordance with the department's *Policy and Procedure Manual*, which states:

> *Each Director or designee shall complete as frequently as changes so require, and submit to the DHSS human resources office,* [a list showing] *the current supervisor for each employee for purposes of maintaining accurate notices to supervisors on overdue evaluation reports.*

According to human resources management, they do not track late or missing evaluations and do not send out notices to supervisors on overdue evaluation reports. The message from management is that supervisors should not conduct a performance evaluation if they will be just "slapping" one together. Management stated that in the past there were problems when supervisors gave acceptable performance evaluations, even though the employee was not performing adequately. In these instances, the division had difficultly taking disciplinary actions because no problems have been documented.

The Division of Personnel offers training seminars to new supervisors regarding their duties and responsibilities; however, the division should also offer ongoing training classes for human resource managers and supervisors on performance evaluations and exit interviews. OCS and DJJ should utilize these new training classes for their managers and supervisors.

The Division of Personnel should continue its review of personnel evaluation forms for areas that need improvement so that the forms are easier to use and do not overwhelm the supervisors. Finally, the Division of Personnel should complete its evaluation of the individual human resources sections tracking system. The division needs to ensure that all human resources sections overseeing the agencies are utilizing the current tracking system so that performance evaluations are conducted and merit increases are awarded in accordance with policy.

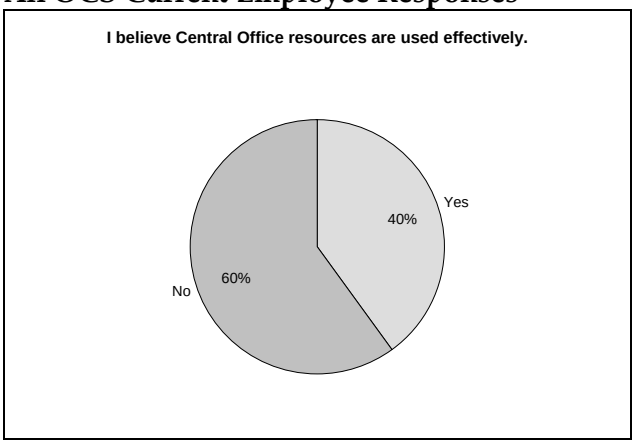
Recommendation No. 6

The OCS deputy commissioner should analyze the central office staffing to determine if all positions are vital to the effectiveness of the division.

The staff at OCS' Juneau central office increased by 67% between FY 99 and FY 03, whereas OCS as a whole has only increased by 26%.[113] Although the division was reorganized in July 2003 and additional duties were allocated to OCS' central office, the views of 60% of the current OCS employees indicated that the central office resources were not being used effectively. (See Exhibit 21)

Exhibit 21

All OCS Current Employee Responses

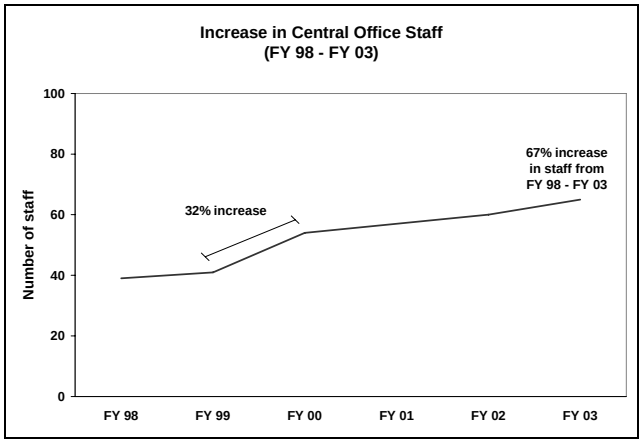


The central office staff in FY 03 totaled 65, including 19 employees in grant-oversight positions that were not adequately performing their duties. (See Recommendation No. 7)

Additionally, many employees who were surveyed conveyed a sense of frustration and resentment concerning the central office. For instance, they said:

- *"Central office has doubled"* since the reorganization when the Division of Juvenile Justice was established.
- There is a lack of equitable workload and staff distribution at the central office.
- Staff in the central office is *"unqualified, ill-prepared, and lazy."*

Exhibit 22



There was a 32% increase in the central office's budgeted positions during the first fiscal year after the separation of Youth Corrections from DFYS in July 1999. (See Exhibit 22) After the restructuring, a decrease in the central office's staff was expected. However, the

[113] The 26% increase in staffing excludes the additional staff that OCS gained during the reorganization from the Division of Public Health and the Division of Medical Assistance in July 2003.

largest staff increase between FY 98 and FY 03 actually took place right after the restructuring.

The OCS deputy commissioner has begun to review the staffing levels at the central office. We recommend that the deputy commissioner complete her review of the central office positions to determine if they are vital to the effectiveness of the division. OCS regional and field management staff should be involved in the position review process. The findings of the review should be communicated to regional and field offices as part of an effort to establish better lines of communication.

Recommendation No. 7

The OCS deputy commissioner and the DJJ director should strengthen oversight of grantees to ensure that services are being provided.

Interviews with grant program staff and comments from the survey indicate that OCS and DJJ are not adequately monitoring their grantees to ensure services are provided to OCS and DJJ clients. (See Exhibit 23)

Monitoring grantees involves a combination of reviewing grantees' quarterly evaluation reports and performing on-site reviews. As stated in the Report Conclusions, grantees are not being held accountable when client services, outlined in the grant agreements, are not being provided.

In FY 03, OCS had a staff of 19 employees, mostly either social services program officers or coordinators,[114] to monitor 147 grants to 78 grantees, totaling $21.9 million. These employees performed on-site reviews on 23 FY 03 grants, comprising 32% of the grant award amounts but only 15% of the total number of grants.

DJJ had 4 employees to monitor 81 grants to 53 grantees, totaling $2.1 million. According to staff, due to fiscal constraints, on-site reviews of DJJ grantees were rarely conducted in FY 03. According to the department's grant regulations, a fiscal audit of grantees' operations should be conducted

Exhibit 23

Representative Survey Comments Regarding the Lack of Grant Monitoring and Grantee Accountability.
• The division consistently funds grantees that don't provide services to clients. • There is no accountability from grantees. • DFYS should monitor the grantees more often and offer technical assistance to implement grant programs. • Program coordinators need to manage the programs and not be grant administrators. • The state rarely gets the quality of services it is paying providers to administer.

[114] These positions are at a range 20 or above on the salary schedule.

at least every two years.[115] In addition to the fiscal audit, a performance and compliance review should be performed in order to determine if the grantees are providing the contracted-for services to their clients.

OCS and DJJ should establish procedures for performing on-site grantee reviews and to standardize on-site review questionnaires. During the reviews, contact should be made not only with the grantee, but also with its clients and the local OCS or DJJ staff.

After the review is complete, the procedures should require that a formal letter be sent to the grantee providing findings and recommendations. The grantee should then develop a corrective action plan and submit it to the division for approval and further follow-up.

In order to make certain that adequate services are provided to the divisions' clients, we recommend that, in addition to reviewing the grantee's quarterly evaluation reports, each division perform on-site grantee reviews.

OCS and DJJ should monitor and track the scheduling of the on-site reviews, the performance of the reviews, and the implementation by the grantee of corrective action plans. The divisions should continue to utilize the single audits conducted by public accountants, in accordance with federal guidelines.

Recommendation No. 8

The DHSS commissioner should require OCS to conduct a complete internal review of child fatalities and to provide a corrective action plan, if necessary, from the OCS deputy commissioner to ensure that related systemic, procedural, or personnel issues are improved.

The OCS Evaluation unit performs program reviews and on-site reviews of OCS offices around the State. It plans to implement scheduled reviews of client case files. The unit also functions as the OCS Quality Assurance Committee. One of the unit's duties is to review the deaths of all children who were in state custody at the time of death or who had prior contact with OCS. The unit performs a limited review of the child's case file and documents its findings and recommendations in a memorandum of concern sent to the division's director (now deputy commissioner). The unit's effectiveness was hindered by the previous director's lack of attention to the memorandums.

The limited review performed by the unit also does not appear to include a thorough case file review or interviews with people who had contact with the child prior to death. [116] An extended review would ensure that complete information is obtained to determine if there is a systemic or procedural problem or if additional social worker training is needed.

[115] 7 AAC 78.230 (Audit requirements).
[116] Individuals who should be contacted include the school nurse, social worker, licensing specialist, and community resource providers.

Recommendations and corrective actions could then be designed to help prevent further incidents of child fatalities.

Further, OCS is required by the federal Child Abuse and Prevention Treatment Act[117] to publicly report information and findings concerning child fatalities. The Act states that if

> *. . . the State has in effect and is enforcing a State law, or has in effect and is operating a Statewide program, relating to child abuse and neglect* [it must have] *. . . provisions which allow for public disclosure of the findings or information about the case of child abuse or neglect which has resulted in a child fatality or near fatality.*

We recommend that the Evaluation unit conduct more thorough internal child-fatality reviews when the child was in state custody at the time of death or had received services from OCS, and to publicly report its findings as required by the Child Abuse and Prevention Treatment Act.

We also recommend that the DHSS commissioner receive a corrective action plan from the OCS deputy commissioner within 30 days of receipt of the Evaluation unit's report and follow up to ensure its implementation. This will ensure that corrective action is taken to provide for the future safety of abused and neglected children who are in state custody or seen by OCS staff.

Recommendation No. 9

The OCS deputy commissioner should eliminate the use of the Anchorage informal licensing action committee.

Community Care Licensing unit employees are charged with conducting home studies of licensed foster homes, residential care centers, and child placement agencies. The studies' purposes are to reduce risk of harm to children and to provide them with a safe living environment by licensing only safe homes. Licensing unit specialists are familiar with pertinent statutes and regulations and are trained in home evaluation skills.

The Anchorage office formed an informal licensing action committee, consisting of the manager, a social worker, and the licensing unit supervisor, to review negative licensing actions taken by the licensing unit. Due to the shortage of available foster homes, however, those involved in the placement of children may be more accepting of questionable homes than those who are trained to determine the safety of a foster home.

[117] 42 U.S.C. 5106a, Sec. 106(b)(2)(A)(vi). *Grants to States for Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention and Treatment Programs.* OCS received $375,000 in federal funds for FY 04. Therefore, it must comply with the terms of the Act.

Foster home investigations in the Anchorage region showed that some of the licensing unit's recommendations for negative licensing actions were overruled by the Anchorage informal licensing action committee, resulting in delays in removing children from an unsafe home and revoking the care provider's license.

When a negative licensing action is taken by the licensing unit, the affected individual or home may appeal the decision through the processes provided under AS 47.35. The decision does not need to undergo extra scrutiny by a committee, whose members may have competing priorities and may not have as much experience in the licensing process as the specialists.

The appeal process established by statute should be the first step, if needed, after the issuance of a negative licensing action by the licensing unit. The licensing action committee is not needed. The direct use of the appeal process will lend credibility to the licensing unit and will prevent overrule of the unit's decisions by OCS management. The OCS deputy commissioner should eliminate the use of this committee and rely on the findings of the licensing unit.

DFYS FIELD OFFICE MANAGEMENT

Recommendation No. 10

The OCS deputy commissioner should strengthen the supervisory case review process.

None of the regions consistently perform supervisory case reviews in compliance with division policies and procedures. In general, most field offices conduct regular case conferences, but do not conduct regular case-record reviews. Additionally, there is currently no formal mechanism in place, statewide, for management to monitor and ensure timely performance and effectiveness of case-record reviews.

Reasons cited by DFYS management for noncompliance include that the standard is impractical, given the agency's high caseloads; that supervision is primarily verbal; that the process is time consuming; that the process duplicates other quality assurance controls; and that the forms are not designed well.

The lack of regular and adequate case-record reviews unnecessarily increases the agency's exposure to risks. Even with regular case conferences, a supervisor may not be familiar with all the aspects of the case, required actions may not be timely or up-to-date,[118]

[118] Examples of required actions include timely investigations, safety assessments, administrative review notifications and documentation, medical and educational services assessments, and social worker contacts with the child and parents.

documentation may be insufficient or lacking,[119] poor work habits may continue uncorrected, and training needs may not be identified in a timely manner. Ultimately, the quality of service to families and the safety of children may be compromised.

The deputy commissioner should streamline the supervisory case review process to improve its efficiency and eliminate redundancies. Steps could include identifying and eliminating areas of the process that duplicate other control activities, redesigning forms, and providing additional guidance to reviewers. Management should solicit input from supervisors and front-line staff on how the process can be made more useful. Furthermore, the deputy commissioner should ensure that staff verifies performance of the case-record reviews. By not monitoring the case-record reviews, management inadvertently may foster the impression that these reviews are discretionary.

Recommendation No. 11

The OCS deputy commissioner should ensure that adequate funds are allocated for regional management and supervisors to visit the field offices they oversee.

Historically, supervisors and regional management have been expected to travel on a quarterly basis to the field offices they oversee. However, management and supervisor visits to most field offices from July 2001 through March 2003 occurred far less frequently. Except for a few offices, regional management had no or very limited on-site contact with rural workers. More than half of the field offices without on-site supervisors received fewer than four visits from supervisors per year.

Management reported that it would like to see more frequent visits to the field offices, but its decreasing allocations to travel do not allow for regular visits by either regional management or supervisors.

Currently, the number of field office visits is inadequate to support the level of supervision mandated by division policy. At risk are child safety and service quality. Limited travel translates into less direct oversight of the field office, less face-to-face contact between the worker and supervisor, and fewer or no case-record reviews. Further reductions in face-to-face contact could lead to an increased sense of isolation, particularly in single-worker offices, and the impression that management is far removed from day-to-day operations.

We recommend that the OCS deputy commissioner ensure that sufficient funds are allocated for regional management to travel to field offices with on-site supervision at least semiannually. To allow for some direct observation of operations, increase face-to-face contact with the worker, and facilitate regular case-record reviews, we recommend that

[119] Two supervisors relayed separate instances when a worker had told them that a required action had been performed; when the case was transferred to another worker, however, it was discovered that the action had not been performed.

management continue to fund and encourage quarterly supervisor visits to field offices that are without on-site supervision, and quarterly staff manager visits to field offices when the supervisor position is vacant.

Recommendation No. 12

The OCS deputy commissioner should develop an updated workload measurement model.

Excessive caseloads are a primary concern among workers, and they negatively impact many areas of work, from service quality to employee satisfaction. Compounding the problem is the perception that manpower resources are not equitably distributed across the field offices.

The agency has long been aware of the need to develop an accurate workload measurement model. In 1998, the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) recommended that the division perform an updated workload accounting study.[120] In a 1998 audit[121] and follow-up audits in 1999[122] and 2000,[123] we recommended and continued to recommend that the agency develop an updated, accurate, and relevant workload measurement model. In 1999, the division adopted the CWLA caseload standards as a workload measurement tool.

However, recognizing the limitations of the caseload model, in our 2000 follow-up audit we continued to encourage the agency to modify its measurement model to improve its usefulness as a management tool. Management responded that it would develop a new workload measurement model based on the CWLA standards and would implement a new risk assessment model. Although the new risk assessment model was implemented in 2002, no progress was made on a new workload measurement model. OCS management recognizes the agency's need for an updated workload measurement model and plans to conduct a workload study to identify where manpower resources need to be distributed.

We encourage the OCS deputy commissioner to go forward with the workload study and the development of an updated workload measurement model. Supervisors and front-line workers should be involved in the process. We also recommend that any additional positions approved by the legislature be distributed based on need.

To manage short-term fluctuations due to vacations, illness, vacancies, and peaks in caseload, we recommend that the agency consider having floating social worker positions in

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[120] Child Welfare League of America, *Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Family and Youth Services Briefing Paper,* 1998.

[121] Alaska Division of Legislative Audit, *Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Family and Youth Services, Selected Child Protection Issues, March 26, 1998,* Audit Control No. 06-4586-98.

[122] Alaska Division of Legislative Audit, *Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Family and Youth Services, Follow-up Audit, January 26, 1999,* Audit Control No. 06-4595-99.

[123] Alaska Division of Legislative Audit, *Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Family and Youth Services, Follow-up Review of Select Aspects of Child Protection Services Operations, February 18, 2000,* Audit Control No. 06-4604-00.

each region. Finally, once the workload study has been performed and manpower resources distributed as necessary, management should determine whether additional positions are needed.

DJJ PROBATION SERVICES

Recommendation No. 13

The DJJ director should ensure that policy standards are met.

Intake and probation case files showed that various division policies are not followed. Error rates ranged from 17% to 83% as follows:

- Delinquency intakes
  1. Intake decisions not timely – 25%
  2. Inadequate or missing documentation of intake decisions – 17%
  3. Critical forms not used or not signed – 48%

- Probation supervision
  1. Risk/Need Assessments for court-required report not completed – 50%
  2. Predisposition reports required by court not timely – 25%
  3. Probation Case Plans not signed by juvenile or never prepared – 19%
  4. Preparation of Case Plans not done within time frame – 50%
  5. Quarterly review of probation Case Plans not done – 83%
  6. Probation Case Plans not rewritten upon critical event – 67%
  7. Frequency of JPO contacts with juveniles did not meet standards – 75%
  8. No documentation of assigned tasks[124] completed by juvenile – 33%
  9. Inadequate documentation for early discharge from probation – 31%
  10. Closing summary of probation case not done – 40%

To say DJJ is providing substandard services to its clients would not be accurate. No file appeared blatantly negligent or caused us to question a decision made. However, the risk still exists of an offense not being adequately addressed or the increased likelihood of a juvenile reoffending because of DJJ's failure to follow its policy.

JPOs who were interviewed recognized the need for documentation, but stated, given the workload, that paperwork and data entry has a lower priority. Most of DJJ's efforts are directed toward the juvenile and attempting to fix less-than-ideal situations. In a busy human services environment, paperwork and administrative duties are likely to be pushed aside.

[124] These may include community work service, payment of restitution, counseling, drug or substance abuse evaluation, treatment, and so forth.

The type of person that desires to work in public service, especially involving children or justice, would typically be more concerned about dealing with client-related issues, as opposed to administrative matters. This attitude also affects the integrity of DJJ's Juvenile Offender Management Information System (JOMIS), as mentioned previously. A balance between providing services and administrative duties must be sought to ensure quality services. This issue also relates to Recommendation No. 14 below.

However, DJJ's policy was formulated to provide a level of response, care, and involvement to help juveniles in need of services or to provide guidance in the right direction. If the policy continues to be circumvented, steps or alternatives in formulating a course of action might be overlooked, resulting in less-than-ideal situations or outcomes. To minimize the risk to Alaskan youth and the general public, DJJ should require that probation services be provided in accordance with established policy.

Recommendation No. 14

The DJJ regional managers should ensure that quarterly intake and probation case reviews are performed as required.

Division policy requires supervisors to perform quarterly reviews of intake and probation case files. Intake case files to be reviewed are chosen at random from a JPO's caseload; however, no specific sampling technique is mentioned for probation case files. Unlike in OCS, the internal case reviews performed by supervisory staff are DJJ's only activities for its quality assurance program.[125]

Internal case reviews are not being performed regularly statewide. As a result, there is less chance of ensuring each case is handled appropriately and consistently. This is also supported by the findings in Recommendation No. 13.

Supervisory involvement is always useful to help identify any overlooked areas or offer suggestions or another course of action. However, there is minimal management oversight of JPOs. Documented supervisory oversight is lacking in performance and substance. Quarterly intake and probation case reviews should be performed in accordance with policy.

Recommendation No. 15

The director of DJJ should ensure that training levels are met.

JPOs do not receive the hours and specific annual training that DJJ's policy requires. The policy states that JPOs should receive 40 hours of training during each fiscal year. Some of

[125] The Office of Children's Services' quality assurance program includes, in addition to its supervisory case-record reviews, on-site reviews of cases by its Evaluation unit and administrative reviews of cases.

those hours are required to be training in physical and nonphysical intervention and arrest procedures.

In order to receive accreditation status from the American Correctional Association, JPOs must meet the 40-hour minimum annual training. Currently, DJJ has chosen not to seek accreditation for its probation services because of the associated costs in dollars and time. As a result, resources may have been redirected from training.

Accreditation standards are based on valid, reliable research and exemplary correctional practices. Therefore, DJJ should ensure that its policy of 40 hours is met or should change the policy to be based on best-practice criteria, not reallocation of funding.

DJJ is taking both safety risks, for staff and clients, and legal risks by not having adequately trained staff. In addition, DJJ may have less favorable outcomes for the rehabilitation of offenders, especially those with special needs. To mitigate these risks, DJJ should ensure that its staff gets the necessary training, whether or not the division is accredited.

DJJ EMPLOYEE DISCIPLINE

Recommendation No. 16

The DHSS commissioner should ensure that policies and procedures for reporting abuse and neglect of delinquent youth in state custody are clarified and implemented on a statewide basis.

During FY 97 and again in FY 02, reports of abuse of juveniles in DJJ's youth facilities were not reported in accordance with a facility's policy and procedures or the OCS procedures. This is due, in part, to unclear policies, procedures, and interagency responsibilities.

The policies and procedures for reporting abuse and neglect of youth in state custody while in youth facilities are not consistent. In particular, we noted inconsistent policies for institutional administrative investigations with regard to allegations or complaints of alleged child abuse or neglect. The McLaughlin Youth Center (MYC) policy number 315 (5) states:

> *Upon receipt of a report alleging substantial misconduct by a facility employee which has occurred on or off duty, the Superintendent will notify the supervising Youth Corrections Operations Manager within one business day.*
>
> *A. If the allegation or complaint alleges child abuse or neglect, the Superintendent will file a report of child abuse or neglect with the Regional Social Service Manager*[126] *immediately following notification to the Youth Corrections Operations Manager. The Regional Social Service Manager will*

[126] As of FY 00, this position was under DFYS.

> *initiate the interagency child abuse reporting protocol, which includes notification to the Department of Law. The Department of Law, as necessary, notifies the appropriate law enforcement agency.*

The Johnson Youth Center policy number 1.26 (C) states:

> *Upon receipt of a report alleging substantial misconduct by a Facility employee, occurring on duty, the Superintendent will notify the Statewide Operations Manager and the Division Director within one business day.*
>
> *1. If the allegation or complaint alleges child abuse or neglect, the Superintendent will file a report of child abuse or neglect with the Regional Social Service Manager, immediately following notification of the DJJ Statewide Operations Manager and Division Director.*

JYC's policy does not mention the regional social service manager's initiating an interagency child abuse reporting protocol or the notification to the Department of Law, which is to notify, if necessary, the appropriate law enforcement agency.

According to the field administrator for OCS, a report of child abuse or neglect from a youth facility superintendent would be taken by an OCS social worker and recorded in the agency's case management system. OCS would not investigate the report, since DJJ youth facilities are not licensed by OCS. Instead, OCS would contact the local law enforcement agency after receiving the report. The law enforcement agency would conduct an investigation, as considered necessary.

The procedure followed by OCS differs from the MYC policy that states OCS will notify the Department of Law, which is to notify the law enforcement agency. The JYC policy is silent on the interagency protocol among DJJ, OCS, and the Department of Law.

In addition, the interagency protocol should be clarified as to which DHSS division, if any, contacts the Department of Law and the appropriate law enforcement agency.

Policies and procedures for reporting potential child abuse or neglect should be clear and consistent to protect children as intended by AS 47.17.

Recommendation No. 17

The DHSS commissioner should provide training related to reports of abuse or neglect of delinquent youth in state custody, as required by statute.

In 1986, the legislature enacted law that requires training in the recognition and reporting of child abuse and neglect for state employees and certain public school employees. Alaska Statute 47.17.022, *Training*, as amended in 1990, states:

(a) A person employed by the state . . . who is required under this chapter to report abuse or neglect of children shall receive training on the recognition and reporting of child abuse and neglect.

(b) Each department of the state . . . that employs persons required to report abuse or neglect of children shall provide

(1) initial training required by this section to each new employee during the employee's first six months of employment, and to any existing employee who has not received equivalent training; and

(2) at least once every five years, appropriate in-service training required by this section as determined by the department . . . .

(c) Each department . . . that must comply with (b) of this section shall develop a training curriculum that acquaints its employees with

(1) laws relating to child abuse and neglect;

(2) techniques for recognition and detection of child abuse and neglect;

(3) agencies and organizations within the state that offer aid or shelter to victims and the families of victims;

(4) procedures for required notification of suspected abuse or neglect;

(5) the role of a person required to report child abuse or neglect and the employing agency after the report has been made; and

(6) a brief description of the manner in which cases of child abuse or neglect are investigated by the department and law enforcement agencies after a report of suspected abuse or neglect.

Further, each department that must comply with AS 47.17.022(b) must also file a current copy of its training curriculum, along with related training materials, with the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault.

DJJ does not have a formal training curriculum for employees regarding the recognition and reporting of child abuse and neglect. However, during FY 05, the Ketchikan Regional Youth Facility conducted an employee training for reporting child abuse and neglect. The DJJ director has passed on the informal notes from this class to the other youth facilities.

While this is an effort toward providing the required training, a more formalized statewide training curriculum should be developed to ensure it includes all the items specified in AS 47.17.022 (c). This training curriculum, along with related materials, should be filed with the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault in accordance with the statute. This training will assist DJJ employees in recognizing and reporting instances of child abuse such as those that occurred at JYC, as discussed above in Recommendation No. 16.

MANAGEMENT TRAVEL

Recommendation No. 18

The Office of the Governor and DHSS commissioner should ensure that travel policies and procedures are understood and enforced at all levels within the department.

Alaska Statute 39.20.140 states:

> *(a) The Department of Administration may not pay an official or employee for per diem or transportation costs unless the travel is clearly necessary to benefit the state. . . .*
>
> *(d) Officials and employees are authorized to travel only the least number of days necessary to transact the business involved, to secure return passage, and to return.*
>
> *(e) Every official and employee shall, unless otherwise authorized by law to travel outside the state, obtain prior approval for travel outside the state from the head of the official's or employee's department or from an immediate supervisor. . . . If an employee deviates materially from the travel authorized under this section, the employee must obtain approval for the deviation from the person who approved the travel before the Department of Administration may reimburse the employee for the travel.*

Further, AS 39.20.160 states that DOA shall adopt travel regulations and that such regulations *"shall be uniform for all officials and employees, and all agencies and departments."*

In accordance with the statutes, DOA established travel policies and procedures within the Alaska Administrative Manual (AAM). AAM 60.010 requires all state agencies and travelers to comply with the policies whenever traveling on state business. It also states, *"The policies apply uniformly to all travelers . . . ."* The policies define a traveler as either a state official or a person employed by a state agency. Travel is required to be approved in advance.[127]

Travel requests must be in writing and document all the essentials of the trip including purpose, destination, dates, estimated costs, any related leave requests, and approval for a car rental. Upon completion of the travel, the traveler is to document on a travel authorization (TA) all costs associated with the trip along with required receipts. The traveler signs the completed TA and obtains post-travel approval from an authorized official.

In addition, DHSS established departmental travel policies and procedures within its *Policy and Procedure Manual* at section 640, which states:

[127] Travel by commissioners is to be preapproved by the governor or his designee.

> *(C) Employees requesting travel, supervisors recommending travel, and officials authorized to approve travel must ascertain that the proposed travel is essential and in the best interests of the state. The officials must also ensure that full consideration has been given to alternatives such as written or electronic communication and that savings are realized whenever possible through the use of discount rates. . . .*
> *(E) No department employee has the authority to approve his or her own travel.*

DHSS' *Policy and Procedure Manual* outlines responsibilities for the preapproving officer to control travel costs and for the traveler to travel in the most efficient manner and at the least cost to the State. It reiterates that the traveler must obtain approval prior to the commencement of travel.

The Office of the Governor is to perform the preapprovals for commissioners. However, post-travel review for DHSS commissioners is performed by their executive secretary. Therefore, the Office of the Governor does not have the opportunity to review the itinerary and costs of the actual travel that occurred. Travel by all other state employees receives these approvals from supervising employees within each department. The post-travel approval process for the Office of the Governor may be streamlined through review of management reports from the new automated travel system.

The management staff of DHSS' Office of the Commissioner, OCS, and DJJ did not consistently comply with the travel policies and procedures established by DOA or their own department. The following areas of noncompliance were identified:

- Travel occurred that was not clearly necessary for state business.
- Additional costs for personal travel deviations during a state business trip were not borne by the traveler.
- Considerations of alternative technologies to travel were not documented and, many times, not included in the travel-approval process in order to reduce the costs to the State.
- Discounted airfares rarely were used.
- Multiple attendees traveled to events without consideration of alternative technologies or methods of sharing information among staff, in lieu of sending all interested employees to such events.
- Preapproval of travel was not obtained.
- Documentation of travel costs and route or date deviations for personal purposes was lacking.
- Travel expenses were neither submitted to nor settled by DHSS-DAS (Division of Administrative Services) within the required timelines.

Clearly, all state travel policies and procedures apply to commissioners, directors, management-level staff, and other employees. Both the Office of the Governor and the commissioner of DHSS should ensure that employees comply with the travel policies and procedures. In addition, the Office of the Governor should provide the post-travel approval of the DHSS commissioner's travel.

Noncompliance with policies by commissioners and other managerial staff, whether in fact or appearance, may be wasteful and have a negative effect on employee morale. Management should set the tone at the top through compliance with state and departmental travel policies and procedures.

Recommendation No. 19

The DOA commissioner should clarify and strengthen travel policies.

Subsequent to our audit of DHSS management travel, DOA began implementing a new approach to managing state government travel. This included establishing a State Travel Office under the Division of Finance (DOF) and revising the state travel policies and procedures. Based on the results of our audit, we recommend that the director of DOF consider the following in the revision process.

- Policies for preapproval of travel should contain provisions to ensure that:
  1. all costs are estimated and documented for preapproval;
  2. preapprovals not obtained prior to airfare purchase or the travel start date receive written justification for the approval delay; and
  3. costs not included in the preapproval process are not reimbursed without documented justification for the additional expense.
- The policy for approval of the commissioner's travel by the governor or his designee needs clarification.
- Policies related to personal travel deviations and leave usage while traveling on state business should be strictly enforced at all employee levels, including commissioners and directors.
- The policy for consideration of the use of alternative technologies, instead of travel, should be enforced where necessary and require documentation for the preapproval of travel.
- A policy should be established regarding a limitation on the number of attendees at any one event such as a conference or meeting. Each department should be required to establish a process to share knowledge gained from such events with other interested employees.

Strengthening policies related to the above areas, in conjunction with the new approach of managing state government travel, should diminish potential abuse of travel and reduce costs.

APPENDICES

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Appendix A
Summary of Current DFYS Employee Survey

Question	Current SW	Current CSS	Current Other Staff	Total Current DFYS Staff
Number of Current Employees Surveyed	***168***	***46***	***170***	***384***
Response Rate	***73%***	***85%***	***81%***	***78%***
I am recognized for my contributions to the division.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	6%	8%	21%	13%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	28%	31%	32%	30%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	35%	31%	27%	31%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	24%	15%	14%	18%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	7%	15%	6%	8%
My unit (intake, investigations, ongoing cases, probation services, facility unit, field office, administration, etc.) has a sufficient number of employees to do the job.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	0%	0%	7%	3%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	22%	10%	26%	22%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	23%	28%	29%	27%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	31%	39%	23%	28%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	24%	23%	15%	20%
What additional positions are needed?				
Social Workers	87%	92%	47%	69%
Administrative and clerical staff	68%	51%	65%	65%
Social Services Associates	19%	31%	7%	15%
Supervisory staff	13%	13%	9%	11%
Accounting staff	6%	8%	13%	9%
Information Technology staff	3%	0%	12%	7%
Probation officers	7%	0%	3%	4%
Youth counselors	4%	8%	3%	4%
Regional-level managers/staff	2%	3%	5%	4%
Upper-level managers/staff	1%	0%	4%	2%
Other (e.g., licensing staff, eligibility technicians, adoption specialists, technical trainers)	2%	5%	15%	8%
I review the division's program policies and procedures for guidance in performing my job.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	30%	33%	38%	34%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	41%	31%	32%	36%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	19%	26%	13%	17%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	10%	8%	12%	10%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	0%	2%	5%	3%
My immediate supervisor encourages staff to follow the division's program policies and procedures.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	77%	80%	66%	72%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	16%	10%	16%	16%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	4%	5%	12%	8%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	3%	5%	1%	2%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	0%	0%	5%	2%

Appendix A
Summary of Current DFYS Employee Survey

Question	Current SW	Current CSS	Current Other Staff	Total Current DFYS Staff
I receive adequate training in the division's program policy and procedures.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	18%	10%	18%	17%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	35%	38%	28%	32%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	26%	39%	21%	26%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	16%	8%	21%	17%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	5%	5%	12%	8%
The division's program policies and procedures clearly describe my decision-making authority to me.				
Yes	56%	54%	47%	52%
No	20%	23%	28%	24%
Uncertain	24%	23%	25%	24%
Management performs intake and case file reviews prior to employee performance evaluations.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	10%	12%	n/a	11%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	17%	17%	n/a	17%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	10%	10%	n/a	10%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	15%	0%	n/a	11%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	13%	22%	n/a	14%
Uncertain	35%	39%	n/a	37%
The standards used to evaluate my job performance are fair.				
Yes	75%	72%	75%	75%
No	25%	28%	25%	25%
I receive my performance evaluations in a timely manner.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	11%	17%	15%	13%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	26%	32%	22%	25%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	20%	11%	13%	16%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	18%	11%	16%	16%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	25%	29%	34%	30%
I believe my immediate supervisor holds employees accountable, through use of warnings, reprimands, demotions, or dismissals, if they do not meet the performance standards.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	30%	25%	33%	30%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	35%	31%	29%	32%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	19%	19%	13%	17%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	11%	22%	12%	13%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	5%	3%	13%	8%
I believe my immediate supervisor applies disciplinary actions evenly to all staff.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	41%	23%	41%	39%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	29%	37%	23%	27%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	13%	14%	15%	14%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	12%	12%	11%	12%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	5%	14%	10%	8%

Appendix A
Summary of Current DFYS Employee Survey

Question	Current SW	Current CSS	Current Other Staff	Total Current DFYS Staff
I believe disciplinary actions are applied evenly to all personnel in my division.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	11%	8%	12%	11%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	22%	31%	24%	24%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	34%	22%	27%	29%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	18%	22%	23%	21%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	15%	17%	14%	15%
I believe my immediate supervisor gives employees opportunities to correct poor job performance.				
An appropriate number of chances given	62%	70%	57%	60%
Too many chances given	17%	13%	11%	14%
Too few chances are given	3%	3%	7%	5%
No opportunities are provided	1%	3%	4%	3%
Unknown	17%	11%	21%	18%
I initiated, or was a respondent to, a complaint filed with the department's Labor Relations Section.				
Yes	15%	5%	10%	11%
No	85%	95%	90%	89%
What was the outcome?				
Withdrew complaint	6%	0%	8%	6%
Resolved in my favor	50%	50%	15%	37%
Resolved in favor of other party	27%	0%	15%	21%
Still pending	6%	0%	23%	12%
Other (e.g., different complaints had different outcomes, never heard results, position eliminated)	11%	50%	39%	24%
I initiated, or was a respondent to, a grievance filed with the Union.				
Yes	17%	10%	14%	15%
No	83%	90%	86%	85%
What was the outcome?				
Withdrew grievance	15%	0%	10%	12%
Resolved in my favor	55%	25%	21%	37%
Resolved in favor of other party	10%	25%	0%	7%
Still pending	5%	25%	37%	21%
Other (e.g., different grievances had different outcomes, grievance moved to different jurisdiction, never resolved)	15%	25%	32%	23%
I have adequate supplies and equipment to do my job.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	14%	5%	21%	16%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	41%	44%	50%	46%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	32%	36%	20%	27%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	12%	10%	9%	10%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	1%	5%	0%	1%

Appendix A
Summary of Current DFYS Employee Survey

Question	Current SW	Current CSS	Current Other Staff	Total Current DFYS Staff
I would be more productive if I had better equipment.				
Yes	66%	74%	64%	66%
No	34%	26%	36%	34%
What type of equipment would assist you in your position?				
More copiers/printers	51%	72%	53%	55%
Faster computer	53%	41%	51%	50%
More work space	35%	31%	46%	39%
Upgraded software	43%	24%	35%	37%
More fax/phone lines	29%	28%	15%	23%
Access to email	3%	3%	4%	3%
Other (e.g., upgraded phone system, office supplies, laptops, ergonomic furnishings, PDAs, minor office equipment)	38%	55%	26%	35%
I am provided with adequate training to do my job.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	13%	10%	19%	15%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	49%	56%	25%	39%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	23%	21%	28%	25%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	13%	5%	21%	15%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	2%	8%	7%	6%
I am able to attend all training that is required by the division.				
Yes	54%	61%	60%	57%
No	46%	39%	40%	43%
I am often not able to attend training due to:				
Workload	66%	73%	72%	69%
Lack of funding for travel costs	50%	33%	59%	52%
Scheduling conflicts	45%	27%	38%	40%
Personal reasons	4%	0%	2%	2%
Other (e.g., lack of relief staff, availability, and supervisor support, not a division priority)	18%	7%	30%	22%
I need the following training to perform my job effectively.				
Social worker/JPO Professional development	53%	67%	18%	39%
Software (Excel, Word, Access)	33%	23%	34%	32%
Time management	22%	36%	15%	20%
Supervisory skills	20%	8%	16%	16%
Interpersonal Communication	16%	15%	12%	14%
AKSAS/Geneva	3%	3%	15%	8%
Other (e.g., administrative and office procedures, mental health and substance abuse issues, licensing, adoptions)	11%	18%	17%	15%
I do not need additional training.	15%	8%	25%	19%

Appendix A
Summary of Current DFYS Employee Survey

Question	Current SW	Current CSS	Current Other Staff	Total Current DFYS Staff
The division supports employee career advancement.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	13%	20%	22%	18%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	34%	18%	29%	30%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	33%	31%	33%	33%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	16%	28%	11%	15%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	4%	3%	5%	4%
I have opportunities to develop and apply the skills I need to enhance my career.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	12%	16%	19%	16%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	32%	18%	27%	28%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	32%	41%	31%	33%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	17%	15%	14%	15%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	7%	10%	9%	8%
I believe promotions are made in the best interest of the division.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	7%	8%	23%	14%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	24%	22%	24%	24%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	42%	38%	26%	34%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	19%	21%	20%	20%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	8%	11%	7%	8%
I believe promotions are based on an individual's qualifications.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	8%	8%	24%	15%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	24%	22%	19%	22%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	40%	43%	31%	36%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	20%	19%	18%	19%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	8%	8%	8%	8%
I believe promotions are generally made:				
From within the division	93%	84%	78%	85%
department	5%	11%	13%	9%
From outside the department	2%	5%	9%	6%
I believe that I am:				
Treated fairly when competing for a job or promotion.	49%	38%	47%	45%
Denied a job because unfair advantage was given to another applicant.	15%	21%	8%	12%
Deliberately misled about my right to compete for a job or promotion.	6%	10%	3%	5%
Influenced to withdraw from competition for a job or promotion.	3%	3%	4%	4%
None of the above	32%	59%	35%	35%
I believe that my compensation (salary plus benefits) is the same as people in similar jobs in the private sector.				
Yes about the same	52%	46%	36%	44%
No, mine is higher	11%	3%	7%	8%
No, mine is lower	37%	51%	57%	48%

Appendix A
Summary of Current DFYS Employee Survey

Question	Current SW	Current CSS	Current Other Staff	Total Current DFYS Staff
I believe my current job class and pay range are fair compared with others doing similar work in the division or in the department.				
Yes about the same	61%	31%	54%	53%
No, mine is higher	1%	2%	2%	2%
No, mine is lower	38%	67%	44%	45%
I enjoy the work I do.				
Yes	92%	90%	96%	93%
No	8%	10%	4%	7%
My job is too stressful.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	13%	28%	5%	11%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	39%	23%	23%	30%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	39%	39%	49%	44%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	9%	10%	20%	14%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	0%	0%	3%	1%
In order to handle my workload, I generally work:				
Less than 37.5 hours per week	0%	0%	1%	1%
37.5 hours per week	15%	10%	42%	26%
More than 37.5 but less than 50 hours	73%	69%	48%	61%
More than 50 but less than 60 hours per week	10%	16%	8%	10%
More than 60 hours per week	2%	5%	1%	2%
Are you fairly compensated for your time worked over 37.5 hours per week?				
I am compensated by overtime pay in my paycheck.	18%	17%	22%	19%
I am compensated by corresponding amount of time off.	32%	29%	32%	32%
I am not compensated.	50%	54%	46%	49%
My division's policies and procedures give me the authority to take action when necessary.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	14%	15%	18%	16%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	52%	56%	31%	43%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	30%	23%	35%	32%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	3%	3%	14%	8%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	1%	3%	2%	1%
DFYS policies and procedures, as actually implemented, result in micro-management of my job duties by my supervisor.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	8%	8%	8%	8%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	14%	21%	12%	14%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	35%	29%	28%	31%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	39%	39%	32%	36%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	4%	3%	20%	11%

Appendix A
Summary of Current DFYS Employee Survey

Question	Current SW	Current CSS	Current Other Staff	Total Current DFYS Staff
My immediate supervisor allows me to perform my job duties independently.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	34%	31%	53%	42%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	51%	59%	34%	44%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	11%	10%	6%	9%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	2%	0%	6%	4%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	2%	0%	1%	1%
I receive useful, ongoing feedback from my immediate supervisor on my job performance.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	25%	18%	31%	27%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	44%	41%	27%	35%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	20%	20%	18%	20%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	6%	13%	17%	12%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	5%	8%	7%	6%
The three factors that most motivate me to do a good job are:				
Personal pride or satisfaction in my work	89%	92%	90%	90%
Want to help clients	86%	77%	60%	73%
My immediate supervisor's encouragement	24%	15%	29%	25%
Good working environment	12%	26%	25%	20%
Fair compensation (salary plus benefits)	15%	23%	18%	17%
Availability of flexible working conditions	18%	18%	14%	16%
Recognition from coworkers	15%	5%	16%	14%
Increasing my chances for promotion	7%	0%	9%	7%
Desire to make supervisor look good	2%	0%	2%	2%
Other (e.g., provide quality support to service providers, desire to make the division look good, gain experience)	2%	0%	3%	2%
I feel that the quality of my work suffers because of:				
Unreasonable workload	77%	87%	49%	66%
Turnover in the division	77%	68%	49%	63%
Continually changing priorities	48%	58%	48%	49%
Insufficient number of client service providers	72%	76%	18%	49%
Poor upper-level management skills and techniques	41%	32%	32%	36%
Poor quality of client service providers	42%	42%	10%	28%
Poor regional management skills and techniques	25%	26%	27%	26%
Unreasonable deadlines	27%	24%	16%	22%
Too much micro-management	20%	16%	26%	22%
Lack of adequate office equipment	19%	16%	17%	18%
Poor immediate supervisor management skills and techniques	14%	16%	23%	18%
Other (e.g., lack of clerical support, outside influences on division, lack of funding, lack of flexible schedule)	14%	18%	18%	17%
I like working in this division.				
Yes	85%	90%	90%	88%
No	15%	10%	10%	12%

Appendix A
Summary of Current DFYS Employee Survey

Question	Current SW	Current CSS	Current Other Staff	Total Current DFYS Staff
I plan to continue working in this division.				
Less than 1 year	6%	15%	8%	8%
For 1 - 2 years	14%	23%	11%	14%
For 3 - 5 years	25%	18%	15%	20%
For more than 5 years	29%	23%	36%	31%
It depends on what other opportunities come my way	26%	21%	30%	27%
The top three reasons that may cause me to leave my job are:				
Excessive workload	50%	67%	24%	40%
Earn more money	30%	54%	38%	37%
Retirement	26%	18%	35%	29%
Personal reasons	28%	21%	32%	29%
Lack of opportunities for advancement	23%	41%	31%	29%
Upper-level management's attitude or skills	29%	13%	27%	26%
Move to another city or state	26%	33%	22%	25%
Immediate supervisor's attitude or skills	13%	13%	22%	17%
Regional management's attitude or skills	20%	10%	12%	15%
Other (e.g., lack of funding and resources; return to college, ethical conflicts, layoffs, outside influences on division)	12%	8%	5%	8%
In my unit (intake, investigations, ongoing cases, probation services, facility unit, field office, administration, etc.), morale is:				
Excellent	5%	10%	16%	11%
Good	44%	23%	35%	37%
Fair	28%	44%	29%	30%
Poor	23%	23%	20%	22%
My overall view of the division's upper-level management capability:				
Excellent	4%	3%	17%	10%
Good	30%	50%	39%	37%
Fair	47%	31%	27%	36%
Poor	19%	16%	17%	17%
My overall view of the division's regional management capability:				
Excellent	12%	11%	19%	15%
Good	43%	43%	44%	44%
Fair	30%	27%	24%	27%
Poor	15%	19%	13%	14%
My overall view of my immediate supervisor's management capability:				
Excellent	30%	45%	38%	36%
Good	45%	37%	30%	37%
Fair	19%	13%	22%	19%
Poor	6%	5%	10%	8%

Appendix A
Summary of Current DFYS Employee Survey

Question	Current SW	Current CSS	Current Other Staff	Total Current DFYS Staff
My overall view of the division's concern for clients:				
Excellent	20%	18%	33%	26%
Good	46%	36%	44%	44%
Fair	23%	36%	19%	23%
Poor	11%	10%	4%	7%
My overall view of the division's effectiveness:				
Excellent	3%	3%	8%	5%
Good	35%	26%	37%	35%
Fair	49%	43%	44%	46%
Poor	13%	28%	11%	14%
My overall view of the division's efficiency:				
Excellent	2%	3%	9%	5%
Good	27%	10%	23%	23%
Fair	46%	46%	48%	47%
Poor	25%	41%	20%	25%
I believe subjective and biased treatment of individual employees, either for or against, causes problems in my division.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	9%	14%	10%	10%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	22%	17%	18%	20%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	36%	47%	37%	38%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	28%	11%	18%	21%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	5%	11%	17%	11%
I believe my immediate supervisor:				
Treats me fairly	81%	80%	76%	78%
Is knowledgeable about the program	73%	85%	69%	73%
Has good management skills	56%	56%	52%	54%
Is an effective manager	55%	56%	51%	54%
None of the above	5%	8%	11%	8%
I believe my immediate supervisor:				
Fully considers my opinions and ideas	76%	77%	65%	71%
Informs me about issues affecting my work	73%	69%	63%	68%
Can be trusted to do what he says he will do	66%	56%	62%	63%
Provides for the physical safety of staff	50%	56%	49%	51%
Selects the best-qualified candidate when hiring	44%	51%	51%	48%
Uses fair and open competition for promotions	35%	39%	46%	41%
None of the above	8%	5%	12%	10%
The unit I work in is well managed.				
Yes	81%	74%	70%	75%
No	19%	26%	30%	25%

Appendix A
Summary of Current DFYS Employee Survey

Question	Current SW	Current CSS	Current Other Staff	Total Current DFYS Staff
Rural offices only: The division has been reasonably successful in:				
Hiring staff to work in my field office	32%	33%	14%	28%
Retaining staff in my field office	8%	11%	7%	8%
Both of the above	26%	33%	29%	28%
None of the above	34%	23%	50%	36%
Rural offices only: The regional office provides adequate supervision and support during periods of supervisory turnover and vacancy.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	15%	12%	0%	11%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	15%	50%	36%	25%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	28%	13%	21%	25%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	21%	25%	36%	25%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	21%	0%	7%	14%
Rural offices only: The regional office provides adequate staff support during periods of lower-level staff turnover and vacancy.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	6%	13%	0%	5%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	25%	37%	29%	28%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	31%	37%	21%	29%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	19%	0%	43%	22%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	19%	13%	7%	16%
Rural offices only: Due to turnover and vacancies in my field office, I am required to perform the duties of others in addition to my own.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	16%	37%	29%	22%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	30%	25%	36%	30%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	46%	25%	14%	36%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	8%	13%	14%	10%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	0%	0%	7%	2%
Rural offices only: I feel I am qualified to perform the extra duties.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	31%	25%	54%	35%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	54%	50%	33%	48%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	13%	25%	13%	15%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	2%	0%	0%	2%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	0%	0%	0%	0%
Rural offices only: Communications between my field office and regional office is primarily done by:				
Email	59%	78%	53%	60%
Telephone	41%	22%	47%	40%
In-person visits	0%	0%	0%	0%
Fax	0%	0%	0%	0%
Rural offices only: My immediate supervisor generally responds to my questions:				
Same day	77%	100%	74%	79%
Next day	14%	0%	13%	12%
Within a week	3%	0%	13%	5%
Next week	3%	0%	0%	2%
Within a month	3%	0%	0%	2%
Never	0%	0%	0%	0%

Appendix A
Summary of Current DFYS Employee Survey

Question	Current SW	Current CSS	Current Other Staff	Total Current DFYS Staff
Rural offices only: Regional management visits my field office:				
0 times per year	47%	22%	50%	44%
1 - 3 times per year	53%	67%	43%	53%
4 - 6 times per year	0%	11%	7%	3%
7 - 10 times per year	0%	0%	0%	0%
More than 10 times per year	0%	0%	0%	0%
Prior to December 31, 2002, staff turnover in my unit was:				
High	33%	46%	30%	34%
Medium	25%	18%	28%	25%
Low	32%	13%	27%	27%
Uncertain	10%	23%	15%	14%
In 2003, staff turnover in my unit is:				
High	28%	39%	18%	25%
Medium	26%	24%	30%	28%
Low	41%	32%	42%	40%
Uncertain	5%	5%	10%	7%
Prior to December 31, 2002, staff turnover in my job class was:				
High	49%	55%	25%	39%
Medium	22%	11%	21%	20%
Low	21%	8%	36%	26%
Uncertain	8%	26%	18%	15%
In 2003, staff turnover in my job class is:				
High	45%	59%	15%	33%
Medium	25%	8%	24%	23%
Low	22%	18%	44%	31%
Uncertain	8%	15%	17%	13%
I believe the primary reasons for staff turnover in my job class are:				
Excessive workload	80%	85%	54%	68%
Inadequate compensation	32%	62%	28%	34%
Lack of promotional opportunities	26%	26%	33%	29%
Poor immediate supervisor management skills	34%	28%	23%	28%
Personal reasons	31%	23%	27%	28%
Poor upper-level management skills	27%	31%	24%	26%
Poor regional-level management skills	26%	23%	12%	19%
Moved to another city or state	14%	21%	8%	12%
Attend college	14%	8%	9%	11%
Retirement	2%	23%	1%	4%
Other (e.g., lack of clerical support, recognition, and flexible schedule, promotions, insufficient training)	16%	8%	20%	17%

Appendix A
Summary of Current DFYS Employee Survey

Question	Current SW	Current CSS	Current Other Staff	Total Current DFYS Staff
I believe the department's grantees provide adequate services to the division's clients.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	2%	2%	n/a	2%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	33%	33%	n/a	33%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	50%	49%	n/a	50%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	14%	13%	n/a	14%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	1%	3%	n/a	1%
I believe the types of services provided by the department's grantees are sufficient.				
Yes	18%	10%	n/a	16%
No	65%	53%	n/a	62%
Uncertain	17%	37%	n/a	22%
I believe the number of grantee service providers for all types of services is adequate.				
Yes	9%	8%	n/a	9%
No	80%	68%	n/a	77%
Uncertain	11%	24%	n/a	14%
My unit collaborates with local community resources (native organizations, health aides, Village Public Safety Officers, local government) for client support.				
Yes	96%	95%	n/a	96%
No	2%	3%	n/a	2%
Uncertain	2%	2%	n/a	2%
Contact with community resources is made during the investigative stages for a report of harm or referral.				
Yes	87%	79%	n/a	85%
No	4%	8%	n/a	5%
Uncertain	9%	13%	n/a	10%
Community members are used as collateral contacts with children and families.				
Yes	89%	81%	n/a	87%
No	8%	8%	n/a	8%
Uncertain	3%	11%	n/a	5%
I believe native organizations should assist more in case management.				
Yes	83%	87%	n/a	84%
No	10%	3%	n/a	8%
Uncertain	7%	10%	n/a	8%
I believe the division works effectively with community members.				
Yes	71%	69%	n/a	71%
No	21%	18%	n/a	20%
Uncertain	8%	13%	n/a	9%
I believe my division works effectively with other state agencies and departments.				
Yes	64%	53%	n/a	62%
No	26%	34%	n/a	28%
Uncertain	10%	13%	n/a	10%

Appendix A
Summary of Current DFYS Employee Survey

Question	Current SW	Current CSS	Current Other Staff	Total Current DFYS Staff
The division solicits assistance from native organizations to recruit foster parents.				
Yes	73%	62%	n/a	70%
No	6%	15%	n/a	8%
Uncertain	21%	23%	n/a	22%
I believe child protective services should be provided by:				
Department of Public Safety	11%	18%	n/a	13%
Department of Health and Social Services	86%	79%	n/a	84%
Other state agency	3%	3%	n/a	3%
The Central Office Budget and Finance section provides adequate support to division personnel.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	5%	0%	13%	8%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	36%	31%	40%	37%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	35%	33%	32%	33%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	19%	28%	9%	16%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	5%	8%	6%	6%
The Field Administrator provides adequate support to division personnel.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	11%	0%	17%	12%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	41%	35%	50%	45%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	33%	44%	23%	30%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	12%	12%	7%	10%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	3%	9%	3%	3%
The Field Operations Liaison provides adequate support to division personnel.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	13%	6%	22%	17%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	42%	35%	42%	41%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	30%	31%	24%	27%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	10%	19%	8%	10%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	5%	9%	4%	5%
The Evaluation unit provides adequate support to division personnel.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	4%	3%	7%	5%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	32%	24%	42%	35%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	29%	37%	25%	29%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	21%	27%	20%	21%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	14%	9%	6%	10%
The Permanency Planning unit provides adequate support to division personnel.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	10%	6%	13%	11%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	37%	43%	45%	42%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	34%	31%	32%	33%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	13%	14%	7%	10%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	6%	6%	3%	4%

Appendix A
Summary of Current DFYS Employee Survey

Question	Current SW	Current CSS	Current Other Staff	Total Current DFYS Staff
The Out of Home Care unit provides adequate support to division personnel.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	5%	0%	12%	7%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	33%	32%	42%	38%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	35%	36%	33%	34%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	19%	19%	8%	14%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	8%	13%	5%	7%
The ICWA Coordinator provides adequate support to division personnel.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	13%	18%	17%	15%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	34%	43%	34%	35%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	32%	21%	33%	31%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	8%	12%	9%	9%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	13%	6%	7%	10%
The Policy/Program section provides adequate support to division personnel.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	12%	9%	17%	14%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	35%	28%	42%	37%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	34%	33%	24%	29%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	12%	21%	13%	14%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	7%	9%	4%	6%
The Research/Data Analysis section provides adequate support to division personnel.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	7%	3%	23%	14%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	39%	27%	42%	39%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	36%	37%	23%	30%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	10%	21%	7%	10%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	8%	12%	5%	7%
The Data Processing section provides adequate support to division personnel.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	15%	3%	23%	18%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	41%	31%	46%	42%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	34%	41%	18%	27%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	6%	16%	11%	10%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	4%	9%	2%	3%
The Online Resources for the Children of Alaska (ORCA) unit provides adequate support to division personnel.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	14%	0%	24%	17%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	36%	27%	35%	34%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	24%	43%	23%	26%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	11%	13%	11%	11%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	15%	17%	7%	12%
I believe Central Office resources are used effectively.				
Yes	39%	29%	43%	40%
No	61%	71%	57%	60%

Appendix A
Summary of Current DFYS Employee Survey

Question	Current SW	Current CSS	Current Other Staff	Total Current DFYS Staff
A better use of Central Office resources would be for:				
Field operations	76%	49%	50%	65%
Regional operations	24%	13%	41%	31%
Additional central office support	6%	3%	21%	12%
Other (e.g., office supplies, new phone system, clerical and social worker support for operations, relocate positions to Anchorage)	6%	8%	10%	9%
I believe the social worker licensure requirement will have positive results for Alaska.				
Yes	39%	17%	n/a	34%
No	61%	83%	n/a	66%
The requirement for social worker licensure affected me in the following ways:				
Grandfathered me into my state job	53%	3%	n/a	41%
Provided a lack of promotional opportunities without license	20%	59%	n/a	30%
No effect	30%	26%	n/a	29%
Received pressure to obtain license	15%	8%	n/a	13%
Increased my workload	11%	3%	n/a	9%
Went back to school part-time	1%	5%	n/a	2%
Went back to school full-time	2%	0%	n/a	1%
Reduced my workload	0%	0%	n/a	0%
Other (e.g., two job classes performing the same work for different levels of pay, got licensed, restricts recruitment)	13%	23%	n/a	15%
I believe the grandfather clause in the licensure bill was a reasonable solution for the changes to the licensure requirement.				
Yes	75%	21%	n/a	62%
No	14%	45%	n/a	21%
Uncertain	11%	34%	n/a	17%
I believe the Social Workers (Children's Services) are more qualified now than before the licensure requirement.				
Yes	22%	13%	n/a	19%
No	63%	72%	n/a	66%
Uncertain	15%	15%	n/a	15%
Children's Services Specialists are just as capable as Social Workers (Children Services).				
Yes	70%	90%	n/a	75%
No	22%	5%	n/a	18%
Uncertain	8%	5%	n/a	7%
DFYS has been successful in hiring Social Workers with this new licensure requirement.				
Yes	12%	10%	n/a	11%
No	61%	59%	n/a	60%
Uncertain	27%	31%	n/a	29%

Appendix A
Summary of Current DFYS Employee Survey

Question	Current SW	Current CSS	Current Other Staff	Total Current DFYS Staff
Turnover has increased since the implementation of the licensure requirement.				
Yes	30%	39%	n/a	32%
No	24%	11%	n/a	21%
Uncertain	46%	50%	n/a	47%
I have used the DFYS program to go back to school so I can get licensed.				
Yes	3%	0%	n/a	3%
No	96%	97%	n/a	96%
Uncertain	1%	3%	n/a	1%
Children's Services Specialists receive the same respect as licensed Social Workers.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	23%	20%	n/a	22%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	46%	22%	n/a	41%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	22%	31%	n/a	24%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	8%	19%	n/a	10%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	1%	8%	n/a	3%
Children's Services Specialists receive same complex caseload as licensed Social Workers.				
Yes	83%	100%	n/a	87%
No	7%	0%	n/a	5%
Uncertain	10%	0%	n/a	8%

Appendix B
Summary of Current DJJ Employee Survey

Question	Current JPO	Current YC	Current Other Staff	Total Current DJJ Staff
Number of Current Employees Surveyed	***78***	***235***	***97***	***410***
Response Rate	***85%***	***56%***	***72%***	***65%***
I am recognized for contributions to the division.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	15%	12%	31%	18%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	36%	33%	33%	34%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	24%	35%	22%	28%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	17%	15%	10%	14%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	8%	5%	4%	6%
My unit (intake, investigations, ongoing cases, probation services, facility unit, field office, administration, etc.) has a sufficient number of employees to do the job.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	3%	13%	19%	12%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	23%	39%	29%	33%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	30%	35%	29%	32%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	26%	12%	14%	16%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	18%	1%	9%	7%
What additional positions are needed?				
Youth counselors	23%	80%	37%	55%
Probation officers	82%	27%	30%	42%
Administrative and clerical staff	55%	18%	41%	33%
Social Workers	5%	10%	7%	8%
Information Technology staff	8%	3%	14%	7%
Supervisory staff	3%	9%	3%	6%
Upper-level managers/staff	11%	4%	6%	6%
Accounting staff	3%	4%	4%	4%
Regional office managers/staff	3%	2%	1%	2%
Social Services Associates	8%	0%	0%	2%
abuse clinicians, maintenance workers, psychologists)	2%	8%	9%	6%
I review the division's program policies and procedures for guidance in performing my job.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	28%	39%	40%	37%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	42%	40%	22%	36%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	20%	14%	28%	19%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	7%	7%	7%	7%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	3%	0%	3%	1%
My immediate supervisor encourages staff to follow the division's program policies and procedures.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	73%	78%	78%	77%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	22%	15%	13%	16%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	3%	5%	4%	5%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	2%	1%	2%	1%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	0%	1%	3%	1%

Appendix B

Summary of Current DJJ Employee Survey

Question	Current JPO	Current YC	Current Other Staff	Total Current DJJ Staff
I receive adequate training in the division's program policies and procedures.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	27%	25%	36%	28%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	33%	43%	32%	38%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	28%	25%	16%	23%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	9%	5%	10%	8%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	3%	2%	6%	3%
The division's program policies and procedures clearly describe my decision-making authority to me.				
Yes	78%	79%	72%	76%
No	14%	9%	14%	12%
Uncertain	8%	12%	14%	12%
I believe my immediate supervisor performs an adequate review of intakes and case files.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	37%	51%	n/a	46%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	36%	27%	n/a	30%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	19%	12%	n/a	15%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	5%	8%	n/a	7%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	3%	2%	n/a	2%
The standards used to evaluate job performance are fair.				
Yes	84%	91%	91%	90%
No	16%	9%	9%	10%
I receive my performance evaluations in a timely manner.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	24%	33%	35%	32%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	26%	34%	38%	33%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	21%	18%	12%	17%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	13%	8%	6%	8%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	16%	7%	9%	10%
I believe my immediate supervisor holds employees accountable, through use of warnings, reprimands, demotions, or dismissals, if they do not meet performance standards.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	36%	39%	55%	42%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	43%	31%	27%	33%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	13%	22%	10%	17%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	6%	6%	6%	6%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	2%	2%	2%	2%
I believe my immediate supervisor applies disciplinary actions evenly to all staff.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	43%	51%	68%	53%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	34%	26%	17%	26%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	15%	13%	5%	11%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	3%	8%	7%	7%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	5%	2%	3%	3%

Appendix B
Summary of Current DJJ Employee Survey

Question	Current JPO	Current YC	Current Other Staff	Total Current DJJ Staff
I believe disciplinary actions are applied evenly to all personnel in my division.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	17%	19%	32%	21%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	38%	34%	32%	35%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	30%	25%	24%	26%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	8%	19%	5%	13%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	7%	3%	7%	5%
I believe my immediate supervisor gives employees opportunities to correct performance.				
Too many chances given	2%	17%	17%	13%
An appropriate number of chances given	86%	71%	74%	76%
Too few chances are given	2%	5%	0%	3%
No opportunities are provided	3%	2%	1%	2%
Unknown	7%	5%	8%	6%
I initiated, or was a respondent to, a complaint filed with the department's Labor Relations Section.				
Yes	10%	12%	15%	12%
No	90%	88%	85%	88%
What was the outcome?				
Withdrew complaint	17%	13%	20%	16%
Resolved in my favor	49%	31%	50%	40%
Resolved in favor of other party	17%	25%	10%	19%
Still pending	0%	13%	10%	9%
Other (e.g., never heard results)	17%	18%	10%	16%
I initiated, or was a respondent to, a grievance filed with the Union.				
Yes	13%	17%	20%	17%
No	87%	83%	80%	83%
What was the outcome?				
Withdrew grievance	0%	9%	0%	5%
Resolved in my favor	50%	14%	46%	30%
Resolved in favor of other party	0%	23%	8%	14%
Still pending	38%	23%	8%	21%
Other (e.g., never heard results, settled without resolution)	12%	31%	38%	30%
I have adequate supplies and equipment to do my job.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	24%	33%	36%	32%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	52%	46%	47%	48%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	21%	19%	12%	17%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	3%	1%	5%	2%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	0%	1%	0%	1%
I would be more productive if I had better equipment.				
Yes	44%	57%	45%	51%
No	56%	43%	55%	49%

Appendix B
Summary of Current DJJ Employee Survey

Question	Current JPO	Current YC	Current Other Staff	Total Current DJJ Staff
What type of equipment would assist you in your position?				
More work space	43%	51%	43%	48%
Faster computer	39%	32%	50%	38%
More copiers/printers	32%	26%	37%	30%
Upgraded software	43%	20%	30%	27%
More fax/phone lines	14%	22%	13%	18%
Access to email	0%	3%	0%	2%
Other (e.g., more computers and laptops, safety equipment, cell phones, office supplies, library resources)	46%	39%	33%	39%
I am provided with adequate training to do my job.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	27%	21%	30%	25%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	36%	53%	37%	45%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	27%	22%	22%	23%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	8%	4%	6%	5%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	2%	0%	5%	2%
I am able to attend all training that is required by the division.				
Yes	50%	76%	74%	69%
No	50%	24%	26%	31%
I am often not able to attend training due to:				
Lack of funding for travel costs	81%	61%	94%	76%
Workload	65%	32%	53%	49%
Scheduling conflicts	42%	58%	41%	48%
Personal reasons	0%	6%	0%	3%
Other (e.g., lack of relief staff, availability, and supervisor support)	16%	0%	24%	11%
I need the following training to perform my job effectively:				
Supervisory skills	24%	36%	13%	27%
Software (Excel, Word, Access)	12%	34%	24%	26%
Social Worker/JPO professional development	56%	12%	17%	24%
Interpersonal Communication	9%	22%	6%	15%
Time management	29%	11%	6%	14%
AKSAS/Geneva	0%	1%	9%	3%
Other (e.g., family, group, and individual counseling, mental health and substance abuse, safety, administrative matters)	14%	28%	20%	22%
I do not need additional training.	23%	17%	40%	24%

Appendix B

Summary of Current DJJ Employee Survey

Question	Current JPO	Current YC	Current Other Staff	Total Current DJJ Staff
The division supports employee career advancement.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	29%	25%	44%	30%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	35%	36%	33%	35%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	24%	26%	14%	23%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	10%	10%	6%	9%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	2%	3%	3%	3%
I have opportunities to develop the skills I need to enhance my career.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	24%	26%	48%	31%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	36%	39%	26%	35%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	24%	26%	20%	24%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	11%	9%	3%	8%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	5%	0%	3%	2%
I believe promotions are made in the best interest of the division.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	19%	18%	38%	23%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	35%	39%	31%	36%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	22%	32%	23%	28%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	19%	9%	8%	11%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	5%	2%	0%	2%
I believe promotions are based on an individual's qualifications.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	19%	16%	37%	22%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	35%	39%	30%	35%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	30%	29%	27%	29%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	11%	13%	6%	11%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	5%	3%	0%	3%
I believe promotions are generally made:				
From within the division	95%	93%	85%	91%
department	5%	6%	10%	7%
From outside the department	0%	1%	5%	2%
I believe that I am:				
Treated fairly when competing for a job or promotion.	68%	66%	60%	65%
Denied a job or promotion because an unfair advantage was given to another applicant.	6%	13%	1%	8%
Deliberately misled about my right to compete for a job or promotion.	3%	6%	3%	4%
Influenced to withdraw from competition for a job or promotion.	0%	2%	1%	1%
None of the above	20%	15%	30%	20%
I believe my compensation (salary plus benefits) is the same as people in similar jobs in the private sector.				
Yes about the same	40%	45%	37%	42%
No, mine is higher	2%	12%	2%	7%
No, mine is lower	58%	43%	61%	51%

Appendix B

Summary of Current DJJ Employee Survey

Question	Current JPO	Current YC	Current Other Staff	Total Current DJJ Staff
I believe my current job class and pay range are fair compared with others doing similar work in the division or in the department.				
Yes about the same	47%	41%	43%	43%
No, mine is higher	2%	2%	2%	2%
No, mine is lower	51%	57%	55%	55%
I enjoy the work I do.				
Yes	97%	99%	98%	98%
No	3%	1%	2%	2%
My job is too stressful.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	13%	5%	1%	6%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	17%	22%	14%	19%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	54%	42%	51%	47%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	14%	26%	25%	23%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	2%	5%	9%	5%
In order to handle my workload, I generally work:				
Less than 37.5 hours per week	0%	2%	6%	3%
37.5 hours per week	25%	8%	42%	21%
More than 37.5 but less than 50 hours	54%	84%	50%	68%
More than 50 but less than 60 hours per week	19%	5%	2%	7%
More than 60 hours per week	2%	1%	0%	1%
Are you fairly compensated for your time worked over 37.5 hours per week?				
I am compensated by overtime pay in my paycheck.	2%	58%	12%	37%
I am compensated by corresponding amount of time off.	35%	15%	21%	21%
I am not compensated.	63%	27%	67%	42%
My division's policies and procedures give me the authority to take action when necessary.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	22%	31%	31%	29%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	60%	47%	44%	49%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	16%	17%	15%	16%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	2%	5%	8%	5%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	0%	0%	2%	1%
DJJ policies and procedures, as actually implemented, result in micro-management of my job duties by my supervisor.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	3%	13%	4%	8%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	13%	15%	6%	12%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	35%	40%	26%	36%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	35%	26%	41%	32%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	14%	6%	23%	12%

Appendix B
Summary of Current DJJ Employee Survey

Question	Current JPO	Current YC	Current Other Staff	Total Current DJJ Staff
My immediate supervisor allows me to perform my job duties independently.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	38%	39%	56%	43%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	54%	52%	38%	49%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	8%	6%	6%	7%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	0%	3%	0%	1%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	0%	0%	0%	0%
I receive useful, ongoing feedback from my immediate supervisor on my job performance.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	29%	35%	48%	37%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	41%	39%	26%	36%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	16%	15%	12%	14%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	9%	10%	11%	10%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	5%	1%	3%	3%
The three factors that most motivate me to do a good job are:				
Personal pride or satisfaction in my work	82%	89%	81%	85%
Want to help clients	76%	69%	45%	64%
Good working environment	32%	30%	37%	32%
My immediate supervisor's encouragement	21%	24%	40%	28%
Fair compensation (salary and benefits)	24%	21%	14%	20%
Recognition from coworkers	15%	19%	21%	19%
Availability of flexible working conditions	14%	9%	16%	12%
Increase my chances for promotion	5%	16%	6%	10%
Desire to make supervisor look good	2%	6%	3%	4%
Other (e.g., concern over losing my job)	2%	0%	0%	1%
I feel that the quality of my work suffers because of:				
Insufficient number of client service providers	78%	33%	20%	42%
Continually changing priorities	37%	45%	37%	41%
Unreasonable workload	49%	23%	33%	32%
Poor upper-level management skills and techniques	22%	36%	18%	28%
Turnover in the division	12%	35%	20%	25%
Too much micro-management	24%	26%	14%	23%
Poor regional-level management skills and techniques	19%	17%	12%	16%
Poor quality of client service providers	25%	10%	6%	13%
Lack of adequate office equipment	7%	16%	12%	13%
Poor immediate supervisor management skills and techniques	3%	17%	6%	11%
Unreasonable deadlines	14%	3%	12%	8%
Other (e.g., lack of clerical and staff support, lack of funding, personal, overcrowding, outside influences on division)	14%	10%	27%	15%
I like working in this division.				
Yes	97%	97%	100%	98%
No	3%	3%	0%	2%

Appendix B

Summary of Current DJJ Employee Survey

Question	Current JPO	Current YC	Current Other Staff	Total Current DJJ Staff
I plan to continue working in this division.				
Less than 1 year	10%	2%	1%	4%
For 1 - 2 years	6%	10%	14%	10%
For 3 - 5 years	14%	12%	25%	16%
For more than 5 years	55%	51%	37%	48%
It depends on what other opportunities come my way	15%	25%	23%	22%
The top three reasons that may cause me to leave my job are:				
Retirement	38%	48%	50%	46%
Earn more money	45%	45%	41%	44%
Personal reasons	32%	35%	29%	33%
Move to another city or state	23%	31%	26%	28%
Lack of opportunities for advancement	15%	32%	25%	26%
Upper-level management's attitude or skills	20%	23%	16%	20%
Excessive workload	30%	11%	7%	15%
Immediate supervisor's attitude or skills	9%	13%	16%	13%
Regional management's attitude or skills	14%	8%	4%	9%
Other (e.g., lack of 20-year retirement, lack of alternative work schedule, go back to school, lack of resources)	8%	5%	6%	6%
In my unit (intake, investigations, ongoing cases, probation services, facility unit, field office, administration, etc.), morale is:				
Excellent	19%	15%	31%	20%
Good	44%	48%	47%	47%
Fair	32%	29%	20%	27%
Poor	5%	8%	2%	6%
My overall view of the division's upper-level management capability:				
Excellent	19%	18%	32%	22%
Good	39%	44%	38%	41%
Fair	36%	28%	25%	29%
Poor	6%	10%	5%	8%
My overall view of the division's regional management capability:				
Excellent	16%	13%	39%	20%
Good	56%	51%	39%	49%
Fair	17%	31%	19%	25%
Poor	11%	5%	3%	6%
My overall view of immediate supervisor's management capability:				
Excellent	29%	45%	58%	45%
Good	60%	35%	23%	38%
Fair	8%	14%	17%	13%
Poor	3%	6%	2%	4%

Appendix B

Summary of Current DJJ Employee Survey

Question	Current JPO	Current YC	Current Other Staff	Total Current DJJ Staff
My overall view of the division's concern for clients:				
Excellent	24%	27%	46%	31%
Good	54%	52%	45%	50%
Fair	20%	16%	9%	16%
Poor	2%	5%	0%	3%
My overall view of the division's effectiveness:				
Excellent	10%	9%	26%	14%
Good	50%	48%	51%	49%
Fair	30%	33%	20%	29%
Poor	10%	10%	3%	8%
My overall view of the division's efficiency:				
Excellent	5%	11%	27%	13%
Good	55%	44%	49%	48%
Fair	27%	37%	22%	31%
Poor	13%	8%	2%	8%
I believe subjective and biased treatment of individual employees, either for or against, causes problems in my division.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	3%	12%	10%	9%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	15%	15%	5%	12%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	21%	37%	23%	30%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	42%	28%	36%	34%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	19%	8%	26%	15%
I believe my immediate supervisor:				
Treats me fairly	86%	86%	77%	84%
Is knowledgeable about the program	79%	79%	69%	76%
Has good management skills	58%	65%	69%	64%
Is an effective manager	58%	65%	66%	63%
None of the above	5%	6%	6%	6%
I believe my immediate supervisor:				
Informs me about issues affecting my work	79%	82%	71%	78%
Can be trusted to do what he says he will do	74%	72%	67%	71%
Fully considers my opinions and ideas	71%	68%	69%	69%
Provides for the physical safety of staff	56%	69%	70%	66%
hiring	59%	54%	54%	55%
Uses fair and open competition for promotions	47%	58%	56%	55%
None of the above	5%	7%	6%	6%
The unit I work in is well managed.				
Yes	89%	80%	91%	85%
No	11%	20%	9%	15%

Appendix B
Summary of Current DJJ Employee Survey

Question	Current JPO	Current YC	Current Other Staff	Total Current DJJ Staff
Rural offices only: The division has been reasonably successful in:				
Hiring staff to work in my field office	19%	30%	0%	20%
Retaining staff in my field office	0%	4%	23%	7%
Both of the above	57%	26%	54%	43%
None of the above	24%	41%	23%	31%
Rural offices only: The regional office provides adequate supervision/support during periods of supervisory turnover and vacancy.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	0%	18%	29%	15%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	63%	36%	21%	41%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	21%	39%	29%	31%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	5%	4%	14%	7%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	11%	3%	7%	6%
Rural offices only: The regional office provides adequate staff support during periods of lower-level staff turnover and vacancy.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	0%	11%	23%	10%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	45%	29%	23%	33%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	35%	43%	15%	34%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	10%	14%	31%	16%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	10%	3%	8%	7%
Rural offices only: Due to turnover and vacancies in my field office, I am required to perform the duties of others in addition to my own.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	41%	18%	22%	26%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	18%	18%	22%	17%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	32%	46%	21%	37%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	5%	14%	21%	14%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	4%	4%	14%	6%
Rural offices only: I feel I am qualified to perform the extra duties.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	43%	46%	33%	43%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	43%	36%	42%	39%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	14%	14%	25%	16%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	0%	4%	0%	2%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	0%	0%	0%	0%
Rural offices only: Communications between my field office and regional office is primarily done by:				
Email	36%	63%	64%	54%
Telephone	64%	37%	36%	46%
In-person visits	0%	0%	0%	0%
Fax	0%	0%	0%	0%

Appendix B
Summary of Current DJJ Employee Survey

Question	Current JPO	Current YC	Current Other Staff	Total Current DJJ Staff
Rural offices only: My immediate supervisor generally responds to my questions:				
Same day	91%	68%	87%	80%
Next day	9%	14%	0%	9%
Within a week	0%	14%	13%	9%
Next week	0%	4%	0%	2%
Within a month	0%	0%	0%	0%
Never	0%	0%	0%	0%
Rural offices only: Regional management visits my field office:				
0 times per year	5%	13%	36%	15%
1 - 3 times per year	77%	83%	64%	76%
4 - 6 times per year	9%	4%	0%	5%
7 - 10 times per year	0%	0%	0%	0%
More than 10 times per year	9%	0%	0%	4%
Prior to December 31, 2002, staff turnover in my unit was:				
High	14%	30%	21%	24%
Medium	29%	29%	15%	26%
Low	48%	32%	53%	41%
Uncertain	9%	9%	11%	9%
In 2003, staff turnover in my unit was:				
High	9%	23%	3%	15%
Medium	33%	27%	19%	27%
Low	52%	45%	70%	52%
Uncertain	6%	5%	8%	6%
Prior to December 31, 2002, staff turnover in my job class was:				
High	9%	25%	3%	16%
Medium	20%	29%	13%	23%
Low	44%	31%	53%	39%
Uncertain	27%	15%	31%	22%
In 2003, staff turnover in my job class was:				
High	5%	24%	3%	14%
Medium	26%	30%	18%	26%
Low	44%	31%	52%	39%
Uncertain	25%	15%	27%	21%

Appendix B
Summary of Current DJJ Employee Survey

Question	Current JPO	Current YC	Current Other Staff	Total Current DJJ Staff
I believe the primary reasons for staff turnover in my job class are:				
Personal reasons	46%	56%	37%	48%
Excessive workload	53%	35%	23%	36%
Inadequate compensation	32%	39%	29%	35%
Lack of promotional opportunities	23%	38%	21%	30%
Moved to another city or state	30%	21%	19%	23%
Poor upper-level management skills	6%	21%	3%	12%
Poor immediate supervisor management skills	8%	15%	10%	12%
Poor regional-level management skills	9%	12%	4%	9%
Retirement	11%	8%	7%	8%
Attend college	0%	9%	7%	6%
Other (e.g., lack of 20-year retirement, lack of flexible schedule, promotions, not suitable for job)	6%	26%	10%	17%
I believe the department's grantees provide adequate services to the division's clients.				
Always *(90 to 100% of the time)*	2%	7%	n/a	5%
Most of the time *(about 75% of the time)*	53%	49%	n/a	50%
Sometimes *(about 50% of the time)*	42%	36%	n/a	38%
Hardly ever *(about 25% of the time)*	3%	7%	n/a	6%
Never *(0 to10% of the time)*	0%	1%	n/a	1%
I believe the types of services provided by the department's grantees are sufficient.				
Yes	27%	33%	n/a	31%
No	52%	20%	n/a	31%
Uncertain	21%	47%	n/a	38%
I believe the number of grantee service providers for all types of services is adequate.				
Yes	3%	18%	n/a	13%
No	79%	26%	n/a	44%
Uncertain	18%	56%	n/a	43%
My unit collaborates with local community resources (native organizations, health aides, Village Public Safety Officers, local government) for client support.				
Yes	94%	75%	n/a	81%
No	3%	10%	n/a	8%
Uncertain	3%	15%	n/a	11%
Contact with community resources is made during the investigative stages for a report of harm or referral.				
Yes	68%	58%	n/a	61%
No	10%	8%	n/a	8%
Uncertain	22%	34%	n/a	31%

Appendix B

Summary of Current DJJ Employee Survey

Question	Current JPO	Current YC	Current Other Staff	Total Current DJJ Staff
Community members are used as collateral contacts with children and families.				
Yes	73%	55%	n/a	60%
No	11%	9%	n/a	10%
Uncertain	16%	36%	n/a	30%
I believe native organizations should assist more in case management.				
Yes	63%	62%	n/a	62%
No	18%	13%	n/a	14%
Uncertain	19%	25%	n/a	24%
I believe the division works effectively with community members.				
Yes	84%	61%	n/a	68%
No	11%	13%	n/a	13%
Uncertain	5%	26%	n/a	19%
I believe my division works effectively with other state agencies and departments.				
Yes	77%	57%	n/a	64%
No	10%	17%	n/a	14%
Uncertain	13%	26%	n/a	22%

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Appendix C
Summary of Former DFYS Employee Survey

Question	Former SW	Former CSS	Former Other Staff	Total Former DFYS
Number of Former Employees Surveyed	***246***	***27***	***331***	***604***
Response Rate	***37%***	***41%***	***31%***	***33%***
I left the division for the following reasons:				
Excessive job stress	64%	55%	36%	50%
Too few people to handle the workload	67%	55%	31%	48%
Overall poor management	53%	18%	39%	44%
Believed clients were not being adequately served	52%	45%	27%	39%
Personal Reasons	39%	27%	35%	36%
Inadequate support (equipment, supplies, office assistance, etc.)	44%	18%	21%	31%
Lack of recognition for job performance	33%	9%	25%	28%
Problems with my immediate supervisor	35%	9%	23%	28%
Lack of opportunities for advancement	23%	9%	25%	23%
Unsatisfactory working conditions (office space, furniture, temperature, safety issues, etc.)	29%	9%	12%	19%
To change to a different type of work	19%	18%	18%	18%
To make better use of my skills and abilities	17%	27%	18%	18%
Received a better offer	14%	9%	20%	17%
Desire to earn more money	9%	18%	21%	15%
Lack of opportunities for training	13%	9%	15%	14%
To move to another state or city	11%	0%	16%	13%
Retired	7%	9%	12%	9%
Lack of job security	10%	9%	8%	9%
Problems with coworkers	8%	9%	10%	9%
To pursue nonwork interests	2%	9%	14%	8%
Unsatisfactory working schedule	13%	0%	2%	7%
Problems with workers in other sections	2%	0%	9%	5%
To work more on my own	2%	9%	1%	2%
Unsatisfactory benefit program	2%	0%	2%	2%
Commuting time	0%	0%	2%	1%
An exit interview was performed on, or prior to, my last day at the division.				
Yes	28%	10%	30%	28%
No	72%	90%	70%	72%
I believe that the exit interview was adequate.				
Yes	58%	100%	70%	64%
No	42%	0%	30%	35%
During my exit interview, I believe that I was able to provide meaningful suggestions about improving operations in my former division.				
Yes	57%	100%	61%	59%
No	43%	0%	39%	41%

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Appendix D
Summary of Former DJJ Employee Survey

Question	Former JPO Staff	Former YC Staff	Former Other Staff	Total Former DJJ
Number of Former Employees Surveyed	***44***	***128***	***65***	***237***
Response Rate	***52%***	***28%***	***45%***	***38%***
I left the division for the following reasons:				
Personal reasons	30%	37%	31%	33%
Lack of opportunities for advancement	22%	26%	34%	28%
Lack of recognition for job performance	26%	26%	21%	24%
To make better use of my skills and abilities	22%	21%	28%	23%
To move to another state or city	30%	21%	17%	22%
Overall poor management	35%	26%	7%	22%
Excessive job stress	35%	16%	17%	21%
Retired	26%	16%	14%	18%
Believed clients were not being adequately served	30%	18%	3%	17%
Problems with my immediate supervisor	17%	13%	21%	17%
Desire to earn more money	9%	21%	17%	17%
Inadequate support (equipment, supplies, office assistance, etc.)	17%	13%	17%	16%
Unsatisfactory working schedule	9%	26%	7%	16%
To change to a different type of work	13%	16%	10%	13%
Problems with coworkers	4%	16%	17%	13%
To pursue nonwork interests	17%	10%	10%	12%
Too few people to handle the workload	22%	5%	14%	12%
Lack of opportunities for training	4%	13%	14%	11%
Unsatisfactory working conditions (office space, furniture, temperature, safety issues, etc.)	9%	8%	7%	8%
Lack of job security	4%	10%	3%	7%
Received a better offer	0%	3%	14%	6%
To work more on my own	0%	5%	7%	4%
Unsatisfactory benefit program	4%	5%	3%	4%
Problems with workers in other sections	4%	0%	7%	3%
Commuting time	0%	3%	0%	1%
An exit interview was performed on, or prior to, my last day at the division				
Yes	27%	44%	38%	38%
No	73%	56%	62%	62%
I believe that the exit interview was adequate.				
Yes	50%	75%	91%	76%
No	50%	25%	9%	24%
During my exit interview, I believe that I was able to provide meaningful suggestions about improving operations in my former division.				
Yes	67%	75%	60%	69%
No	33%	25%	40%	31%

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Appendix E
Budgeted Stipend Program Amounts
FY 99 – FY 04 (unaudited)

	OCS Employees			***Students***			
Fiscal Year	**Number of employees**	**Stipend amount per employee**	**Subtotal**	**Number of students**	**Stipend amount per student**	**Subtotal**	**Total**
FY 99	4 F/T MSW	$22,050	$88,200	Not available	Not available	$48,000	**$136,200**
FY 00	4 F/T MSW	$22,050	88,200	6 BSW 3 BSW 8 IHT 3 IHT(T)	$500/8 mo. $750/8 mo. $250 $1,356	24,000 18,000 2,000 4,068	**136,268**
FY 01	4 F/T MSW	$22,050	88,200	6 BSW 2 BSW 1 BSW 9 IHT 5 IHT(T)	$500/8 mo. $750/8 mo. $750/4mo. $250 $1,356	24,000 12,000 3,000 2,250 6,780	**136,230**
FY 02	2 F/T MSW 1 P/T MSW 1 Practicum	$22,050 $8,197 $1,000/4 mo.	44,100 8,197 4,000	5 BSW 2 BSW 4 IHT 1 Practicum	$500/8 mo. $750/8 mo. $250 $1,000/9 mo.	20,000 12,000 1,000 9,000	**98,297**
FY 03	2 F/T MSW 1 F/T BSW 2 P/T MSW 1 P/T BSW 2 P/T BSW	$17,478 $12,200 $6,390 $2,080 $1,040	34,956 12,200 12,780 2,080 2,080	10 BSW 10 IHT	$500/8 mo. $250	40,000 2,500	**106,596**
FY 04	6 employees degree type not available	$5,909	35,459	3 BSW 5 BSW 8 IHT	$500/9 mo. $750/9 mo. $250	13,500 33,750 2,000	**84,709**
Total Budgeted Stipends			**$420,452**			**$277,848**	**$698,300**

Source: OCS Internal Fiscal Training Budgets

Legend

Educational Degree		Employment Status		Training Costs	
MSW	Master in Social Work	F/T	Full-time	IHT	In-house training
BSW	Bachelor in Social Work	P/T	Part-time	IHT(T)	Travel for in-house training

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Appendix F
State of Alaska Budgeted and Filled Social Worker Positions
December 31, 2003

	Budgeted Positions	Filled Positions	Licensed Staff[1]	Percent Licensed (Budgeted)	Percent Licensed (Filled)
Department of Administration					
Office of Public Advocacy					
Social Worker II	1	1	0	0%	0%
Total	1	1	0	0%	0%
Department of Corrections					
Hiland Mountain Correctional Center					
Social Worker II	1	1	0	0%	0%
Total	1	1	0	0%	0%
Department of Health and Social Services					
Division of Alaska Longevity Programs: Pioneers' Homes					
Social Worker II	2	1	0	0%	0%
Social Worker III	3	2	1	33%	50%
Total	5	3	1	20%	33%
Department of Health and Social Services					
Office of Children's Services					
Social Worker I[2]	1	0	0	0%	0%
Social Worker (CS) I	25	13	5	20%	38%
Social Worker (CS) II	108	91	24	22%	26%
Social Worker (CS) IV	41	41	9	22%	22%
Social Worker (CS) V	9	9	1	11%	11%
Total	184	154	39	21%	25%
Department of Health and Social Services					
Division of Public Assistance					
Social Worker II	5	5	0	0%	0%
Social Worker III	1	1	0	0%	0%
Total	6	6	0	0%	0%
Department of Health and Social Services					
Division of Senior and Disabilities Services					
Social Worker II	6	6	0	0%	0%
Social Worker III	1	1	1	100%	100%
Total	7	7	1	14%	14%
Grand Total	**204**	**172**	**41**	**20%**	**24%**

[1] Source of information: Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development, Division of Occupational Licensing and State of Alaska payroll system (AKPAY).
[2] Social Worker I position is a vacant position that has not been reclassified.

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Appendix G

Executive Summary
Child and Family Services Review
Alaska

(Excerpt)[1]

The Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) assesses State performance during a specified time period with respect to seven child welfare outcomes in the areas of safety, permanency, and well-being and with respect to seven systemic factors. The assessment is based on information from the following sources:

- The Statewide Assessment prepared by the State child welfare agency – the Alaska Division of Family and Youth Services (DFYS);
- The State Data Profile prepared by the Children's Bureau of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services;
- Reviews of 50 cases from three areas of the State; and
- Interviews or focus groups (conducted at all three counties and the State capital) with a wide range of stakeholders including children, parents, foster parents, various levels of State and local DFYS personnel, collaborating agency personnel, school personnel, service providers, court personnel, legislators, and attorneys.

The on-site review in Alaska occurred during the week of June 24, 2002.
With regard to the assessment of outcomes, a key finding of the review of Alaska's child welfare programs is that the State is effective in preventing children's re-entry into foster care. The case review process found only one case in which a child re-entered foster care within 12 months of discharge from a prior episode, and the State Data Profile indicates that the State's rate of foster care re-entry for fiscal year (FY) 2000 (4.6 percent) meets the national standard for foster care re-entry (8.6 percent). In addition, the State was found to be effective in placing children in foster care in close proximity to their biological families and with siblings when possible and in the children's best interest.

The CFSR also found, however, that Alaska did not achieve substantial conformity with the seven safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes under assessment. For example, the State data for FY 2000 indicated that the State did not meet the national standards for repeat maltreatment, maltreatment of children in foster care, length of time to achieve reunification, length of time to achieve adoption, and stability of foster care placement. In addition, case reviews and stakeholder interviews revealed a lack of consistency on the part of DFYS with regard to protecting children, promoting their permanency, and ensuring their well-being.

[1] A complete copy of this report can be obtained from the Department of Health and Social Services or can be viewed at http://hss.state.ak.us/ocs/Publications/2002_Final_Alaska_CFSR_report. pdf (July 2, 2005)

A significant concern identified through the CFSR was the lack of success in many cases with regard to achieving permanency for children in foster care. For example, Permanency Outcome 1—Children have permanency and stability in their living situations—was found to be not achieved in 78.3 percent of the foster care cases reviewed and efforts to achieve finalized adoption in a timely manner were a matter of concern in 70 percent of applicable cases. In a substantial percentage of cases, the review determined that DFYS was not effective in ensuring stability for children in their foster care placements (item 6), in establishing appropriate permanency goals in a timely manner (item 7), or in achieving permanency goals in a timely manner (items 8, 9, and 10.)

Another area of concern related to Child and Family Well-Being Outcome 1—Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs. Case reviewers determined that this outcome was substantially achieved in 28 percent of the cases. In a large number of cases, reviewers found that children and families were not receiving needed services (item 17) and were not being involved in the case planning process (item 18). In addition, in many cases, the frequency of DFYS caseworkers' face-to-face contact with children (item 19) and parents (item 20) was determined to be insufficient to monitor children's safety or to promote attainment of case goals, including permanency goals.

Safety issues also were found to be a concern for the State. Maltreatment was found to recur within a 6-month period in 26 of the 50 cases reviewed. In addition, the CFSR revealed that DFYS is not consistently responding to maltreatment reports in a timely manner (item 1), and is not consistently effective in maintaining children safely in their own homes (item 3) or in managing the risk of harm to children (item 4).

With regard to the systemic factors assessed, the CFSR determined that the State is in substantial conformity with the factors related to training for child welfare staff and child caregivers, the Information System and to the agency's responsiveness to the community. However, the CFSR found that the State did not have a case review system or quality assurance system that were sufficient to support the attainment of positive outcomes for children and families. In addition, the CFSR found that the State was not in substantial conformity with the factors of service array and foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment, and retention.

August 5, 2005

Pat Davidson
Legislative Auditor
Division of Legislative Audit
P.O. Box 113300
Juneau, AK 99811-3300

Dear Ms. Davidson:

This letter is in response to your July 21, 2005 confidential preliminary audit report on the Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Family and Youth Services, Division of Juvenile Justice, and Office of the Commissioner, Selected Management Issues, April 11, 2005.

Recommendation No. 18
The Office of the Governor and DHSS Commissioner should ensure that travel policies and procedures are understood and enforced at all levels within the department.

The Office of the Governor concurs with this recommendation. Upon publication of the audit, the Office of the Governor will issue a memo to the cabinet reminding Commissioners that adherence to the State's travel policies and procedures is required at all levels within their departments.

The Cabinet will be reminded that the Governor's Office must preapprove travel for commissioners. However, the Office of the Governor does not agree that Governor's Office post-approval of commissioners' travel is necessary. Post-approval of commissioners' travel appears to be a duplication of effort as final travel costs and compliance with state travel policies would the responsibility of the Administrative Services Director within each department. For consistency purposes, implementation of the State's Central Travel Office will readily identify any deviation to state travel policy and will help ensure compliance on all levels within the departments. Please call me at 465-3876 if you need additional information.

Sincerely,

Linda J. Perez
Administrative Director

cc: Michael A. Nizich, Deputy Chief of Staff

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STATE OF ALASKA

FRANK H. MURKOWSKI, GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

P.O. BOX 110200
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99811-0200
PHONE: (907) 465-2200
FAX: (907) 465-2135

August 11, 2005

Ms. Pat Davidson, CPA
Legislative Auditor
P.O. Box 113300
Juneau, AK 99811-3300

Re: Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Family and Youth Services, Division of Juvenile Justice, and Office of the Commissioner Selected Management Issues, Selected Management Issues, April 11, 2005

Dear Ms. Davidson:

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the preliminary audit report referenced above. Although most of your audit related to the Department of Health and Social Services, two recommendations pertain directly to the Department of Administration and the following response addresses each.

Recommendation No. 5

Department of Administration (DOA), Division of Personnel, should provide ongoing training for supervisors on performance evaluations.

I understand that your finding was based in part, on a survey of active employees as of August, 2003 and former employees who separated between 1998 and August, 2003. As you are aware, in October, 2003, all agency human resource staff were integrated into the Department of Administration, Division of Personnel. Therefore, I am unable to respond with certainty to your finding regarding the timely processing of performance evaluations and merit increases. However, since integration, the Health and Social Services Management Services Team (HSS Management Services Team) has allocated nearly one full time position to the activities of reviewing performance evaluations, coaching supervisors on writing evaluations, correcting employee performance problems identified in evaluations, and notifying division contacts of evaluation due dates.

To assist in the timely preparation of performance evaluations, the Division of Personnel provides evaluation due dates for all employees by department and division on a monthly basis. The HSS Management Services Team has identified division contacts to whom evaluation due dates are provided. These division contacts in turn notify individual supervisors of these dates. This process eliminates the need for divisions to notify the HSS Management Services Team of

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individual supervisor relationship changes as described in department policy and procedure. This is the result of the Division of Personnel's review and replacement of various departmental tracking systems.

With two exceptions, if an evaluation is not prepared, the evaluation due date is not advanced which allows for the identification of past due performance evaluations. The first exception is interim evaluations. If an interim evaluation is not prepared timely, the due date is advanced to the date the employee is eligible for permanent status as failure to track this date can have an undesired consequence. The second exception is when an employee vacates a position or is reclassified in their current position. When an employee moves to another position or is reclassified, their new evaluation due date becomes the date that is tracked. When an employee separates, overdue evaluations are no longer tracked.

In regard to merit increases, it is important to note that a supervisor's failure to timely prepare a performance evaluation does not delay the granting of a merit increase for most employees. For employees in the General Government and Supervisory Units, effective **July 1, 2000,** an employee is granted a merit increase on their merit anniversary date unless the supervisor specifically denies the merit increase through a written performance evaluation prior to the due date. Each pay period the Technical Services staff of the Division of Personnel identify those employees due a merit increase during the pay period and processes them accordingly. This has eliminated the need for retroactive pay adjustments.

Prior to the human resources integration, the former Department of Health and Social Services' Human Resources Office provided performance appraisal training approximately three times per year in Anchorage, Fairbanks and Juneau. Appraisal training is currently available to all divisions of the Department of Health and Social Services through the Division of Personnel's Training and Development Program. These classes are offered in Anchorage and Juneau on a bi-monthly basis from September through June. Classes are provided in Fairbanks quarterly. Additionally, the Training and Development program is offering a number of new classes to assist supervisors with performance management which include The Academy for Supervisors, Performance Coaching, and Change Management for Supervisors. These courses are available to both new and experienced supervisors in addition to Human Resources staff. All courses are also available as needed on a special session basis.

Recommendation No. 19

The Commissioner of Administration should clarify and strengthen travel policies.

Specifically, you recommended the director of the Division of Finance consider the following in the revision process:

- Policies for preapproval of travel should provide provisions to ensure:

  1. all costs are estimated and documented for preapproval;

  2. preapprovals not obtained prior to airfare purchase or the travel start date receive written justification for the approval delay; and

3. costs not included in the preapproval process are not reimbursed without documented justification for the additional expense.

We support the spirit of these recommendations on the preapproval process. Our revised policies mandate costing a trip before approval for ticketing, and require documentation of deviations from the pre-approved travel on the post-trip expense report. We are also evaluating preapproval options such as written blanket authorizations for certain types of travel, especially time-critical travel.

- The policy for approval for commissioner travel by the Governor or his designee needs clarification.

We will work with the governor's office to clarify the approval process for commissioner travel so it can be automated in the travel management software that will be implemented in FY06.

- Policies related to personal travel deviations and leave usage while traveling on state business should be strictly enforced at all employee levels, including commissioners and directors.

We concur with this recommendation. The policies we are developing, with input from executive branch agencies, address personal travel deviations and leave usage. Centralized travel management will increase the state's ability to monitor compliance with these policies.

- The policy for consideration of the use of alternative technologies, instead of travel, should be enforced where necessary and require documentation for the preapproval of travel.

- A policy should be established regarding a limitation on the number of attendees at any one event such as a conference or meeting. Each department should be required to establish a process to share knowledge gained from such events with other interested employees.

These recommendations reflect language in a new section of the travel policy called "Alternatives to Travel." The policy directs agencies to develop and implement alternatives to travel as well as less expensive means of travel such as:

Teleconferencing and video conferencing.
Video recordings and published reports.
Reduced frequency of regularly scheduled out of town meetings.
Restrictions on the number of staff traveling to the same destination.
Coordinating between agencies for joint travel arrangements when more than one agency is involved.

The new policy requires that agencies consider the option of bringing a trainer on-site instead of authorizing employees to travel to an off-site location for training or staff development. The agency will document the comparative cost of an on-site session and retain such documentation on file with the agency's travel records. The agency must also explore the practicality of fulfilling the desired staff development goals through use of video teleconferencing or web-based conferencing where these options may be more cost-effective.

Thank you again for the opportunity to respond to your recommendation.

Sincerely,

Ray Matiashowski
Commissioner

cc: Mila Cosgrove, Director
Division of Personnel
Department of Administration

Eric Swanson, Director
Division of Administrative Services
Department of Administration

Kim Garnero, Director
Division of Finance
Department of Administration

July 29, 2005

Ms. Patricia Davidson
Legislative Auditor
Alaska State Legislature
Legislative Budget and Audit Committee
Division of Legislative Audit
PO box 113300
Juneau, Alaska 99811-3300

RE: Response to Preliminary Audit on Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Family and Youth Services, Division of Juvenile Justice, and Office of Commissioner, Selected Management Issues.

Dear Ms. Davidson:

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the preliminary audit report regarding the Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Family and Youth Services, Division of Juvenile Justice and Office of the Commissioner, Selected Management Issues.

Opening Comments

The Department of Health and Social Services is committed to making improvements in our systems to enhance services for children in our custody. However, we are concerned over the timeliness and relevance of this audit. The length of the audit review made it very untimely, making the recommendations of marginal value. The concerns expressed regarding management appear to be biased and in many instances are no longer valid due to changes in management structure and leadership.

The Department did not wait for this audit to make changes, but rather proceeded with changes this administration identified to deliver better services for Alaska's children. The last few years have been very exciting and under the leadership of the new administration, the Department has made significant improvements that make a positive difference in the lives of Alaskans.

While the audit was underway, DHSS did not sit idle but instead has moved forward, developing and implementing many initiatives resulting in important improvements.

These initiatives have included concrete methods to determine desired outcome measures and ensure ongoing monitoring and progress.

The Office of Children's Services implemented a Performance Improvement Plan in response to the federal audit in 2003, transitioned to the new ORCA technology system to enable OCS to better manage cases, successfully implemented a Quality Assurance unit to maintain continuous quality improvement at all levels of work with families, put in place a strong employee recruitment and retention effort, and worked with legislators Representatives John Coghill and Norman Rokeberg to develop and pass the most comprehensive child protection legislation in recent years with House bill 53. This legislation focuses on the rights of family members, improved practice on the front line and allows for public disclosure of OCS action in certain child abuse cases. OCS has revamped its foster parent licensure process by engaging in a process of improved assessment before the family is approved to accept children into their homes.

The Division of Juvenile Justice has implemented a comprehensive system improvement plan that includes implementation of an objective instrument to guide the use of secure detention, implementation of a research-based assessment instrument for probation youths, and participation of the national performance-based standards (PbS) quality assurance process for all state juvenile facilities. The division's system improvement efforts are all geared toward improving services for youth in the juvenile justice system and to ensure that decisions are made based on data and best-practice research.

This audit is untimely because it began in the spring of 2002 and is only now in 2005 being completed. Some portions of the audit went back to 1997, which is so outdated (eight years) that the relevance of the information is questionable. Because the audit took so long to complete many of the recommendations, findings, and comments are not useful or have already been resolved. We deeply believe that effective auditing is vital to the improvement of government services. From a management perspective, it is troubling and concerning that an audit would take so long to complete and we would urge the Division of Legislative Audit to adopt a performance standard to complete audits in a timelier manner. We would be happy to assist in the development and adoption of such performance standards.

While many of these untimely audit recommendations are benign, we are concerned with the overall tone of the audit. We find it alarming that the audit cites only selective negative individual statements from former and current employees and that these are presented as fact. It does not appear as if an attempt was made to have a balanced and representative approach that presented positive comments and findings, as well as concerns. In any kind of audit it is absolutely critical to focus on objective criteria and this audit failed in that arena and in its approach.

The quality of the audit could have been improved if the auditor would have followed the Generally Accepted Audit Standards from the American Institute of Certified Public

Accountants which are: "1) the audit is to be performed by a person or persons having adequate technical training and proficiency as an auditor. 2) In all matters relating to the assignment, independence in mental attitude is to be maintained by the auditor or auditors. 3). Due professional care is to be exercised in the performance of the audit and the preparation of the report." In particular, we do not believe that the auditors maintained an independent attitude (standard #2). As stated above, based on the manner in which the data and conclusions are presented, it appears that the auditors were predisposed to a negative viewpoint and did not maintain their independence.

The auditors state that the objective of the employee survey is to gather "observations and opinions" of employees, however in choosing to report only a narrow sample of responses, all of them negative, the auditors did not represent a true or accurate summary of employee opinions. This further illustrates our already stated concern that the approach of this audit was to prove an already preconceived finding. We believe that the auditors heavy use of judgmental reporting[1] on using some former employees comments and treating them as fact contributed to the poor quality of the audit and that this excessive reliance on selected opinions contributed to the audit's lack of independence and biased conclusions. An unbiased and neutral review of the total employee survey results displays a much different picture. As you can see from the summary outlined below, the objective data from the survey paints a completely different picture than the narrative in the untimely audit.

<u>DFYS Employees</u>

- 93% of Employees stated they enjoy the work they do;
- 88% of employees said they liked working for the division;
- 83% of employees rated the upper management capabilities as Fair to Excellent; and
- 75% of employees stated their work unit is well managed.

<u>DJJ Employees</u>

- 98% of employees stated they enjoy the work they do;
- 98% of employees said they liked working for the division;
- 92% of employees rated upper management capabilities as Fair to Excellent; and
- 85% of employees state their work unit is well managed.

The key fact is that 88% of DFYS and 98% of DJJ employees in 2003 liked working for their respective division. It is clear that this untimely audit purports to represent employees, but it clearly discounts the employee survey results by not using them in the final audit review.

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[1] A Judgmental Sampling technique allows the sampler to choose data at will; in other words the auditor can select samples to prove an already determined finding.

We are also disappointed in the manner in which the auditors reviewed management travel within the department. It is the discretion of the Executive Branch to determine the criteria on when travel is appropriate or necessary. Series of approvals are established to review whether travel is necessary, which flow up through the supervisory chain all the way to the Governor if necessary. For an auditor to substitute their individual opinion three, four or five years after the fact as to whether management travel is necessary is overreaching. To state that "attendance was not mandatory, given there were other management employees attending" does not recognize the different roles that senior managers have.

Currently the bulk of government operations (policy and budget) is centralized in Juneau, while the balance of the population lives elsewhere. It is critical that top management travel from the Capitol city and there should be consideration that when a manager has established relationships in a community of origin that those ties will benefit the state and that they will be called on to travel more often to that community. Government and governance is improved when the representative voices of our entire state are integrated in decision-making.

The auditor is also inconsistent in the criticism of management travel. In one place in the untimely audit the auditor implies managers are traveling too much and in a second place the criticism is that they are traveling too little. This inconsistency is difficult for our agency to reconcile. It is also curious that the auditor did not calculate the savings to the state of dual residences or using a more central hub (Anchorage or Fairbanks) as a place to initiate travel. Finally, the auditor spent a lot of time and effort reviewing various travel authorizations and in the end concluded that in FY03 the noncompliance rate for adequate documentation was a low 5% which means there was a 95% compliance rate! However, the auditors did not take that into account in their final recommendations.

To reiterate, we find very little of value to this audit and would hope that it would have been more timely, reduced the reliance upon selected opinions and been more objective. DHSS has already addressed many of the management issues contained in the audit and has enhanced many of these critical services before any of these findings were made. We would hope that the Legislative Budget and Audit committee would work to improve the audit process so that audits such as these are more useful and improve state government.

As noted above, effective auditing is vital to improving our operations and increasing the quality of our work. We welcome and embrace good auditing. We would be happy to work to improve the auditing process so that the work product helps us meet our mission – in this case improving the lives of children in Alaska.

With regard to the recommendations contained in this management letter, the Department's detailed responses are as follows:

Recommendation No. 1:

The Office of Children's Services (OCS) deputy commissioner and the Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) director should address employee concerns related to the operation and management of their respective divisions.

We concur with the recommendation.

Office of Children's Services:
OCS has instituted a number of measures to address these issues and employee concerns:

1) The Recruitment and Retention Committee met from January, 2004 through December, 2004, and was comprised of all staff levels from every region. The monthly meetings resulted in identified issues forwarded to the newly formed Senior Leadership Team that began meeting with the new Deputy Commissioner in March, 2005, for discussion, delegation of response and/or mediation, and communication to the entire division. A plan to address those concerns is in development and will include, as a part of regular ongoing quality assurance within OCS, a employee satisfaction
2) A part-time recruitment coordinator was hired in FY 05 and works at the University of Alaska Anchorage, Social Work Training Academy, and will continue to seek out qualified applicants for employment with OCS. Within the last year, she coordinated with Schools of Social Work in accredited Universities across the country through job fairs and letters to job placement offices. She reached 100 new potential applicants, 30 of whom contacted Workplace Alaska, resulting in 20 new employees in the system.
3) OCS planned on holding a Managers meeting in early 2005, to discuss the mechanics and quality of evaluations with technical assistance from the department's human resources experts. That work was delayed due to the change in leadership at OCS in March 2005, but will be rescheduled for the statewide Manager's meeting that will been held in October 2005. Concurrently, internal procedures were developed to include a management tool for statewide monitoring of performance evaluations by regional field and central office administrative managers. The first report was sent by Management Services on November 24, 2004 and sorted and distributed to OCS local offices in early December 2005. The lists of due evaluations have been sent out each month since then.
4) Exit interviews are scheduled with each staff member upon learning of a resignation. The University recruiter position will coordinate and conduct exit interviews this fiscal year in order to provide an impartial perspective. Pending results of this process, the exit interviews may be moved back internally in the following year.

Division of Juvenile Justice:
In the Division of Juvenile Justice it should be noted that this recommendation relies heavily on the assertion that "problems with managing staff, workloads, and program operations… result in high turnover" (p. 57). This reference is not consistent with the report's conclusions on page 15 and management findings on page16, which cite high turnover as an issue only for the Office of Children's Services and not the Division of Juvenile Justice.

DJJ's turnover rate during the two periods studied were 6% in FY '00 and 9% in FY '03. Vacancy rates during these same two periods were 8% and 18%, respectively. The report itself notes that, excluding positions intentionally held vacant due to significant federal budget reductions yielded a FY '03 adjusted vacancy rate of 4%. These figures are significant successes for any industry and even more so for the field of juvenile justice, which requires staff to perform duties that are at times dangerous, with an often volatile and unpredictable population of juvenile offenders. There is no national benchmark data cited for the field of juvenile justice even though page four of the audit report indicates that the National Center for Juvenile Justice (NCJJ) was contacted to obtain information on vacancy and turnover rates.

We would also like to note several indicators from the DJJ employee survey that support an array of positive findings that likely contribute to these low vacancy and turnover rates, including:

- Ninety-eight percent (98%) of current staff indicated that they liked working in this division.
- The majority of current staff (85%) indicated that "the unit I work in is well managed".
- The majority of current staff (84%) indicated that the immediate supervisor "treats me fairly".
- A combined 83% of current staff described their overall view of immediate supervisor's management capability as either "excellent" or "good".
- A combined 92% of current staff said, "my immediate supervisor allows me to perform my job duties independently" either "always" or "most of the time".
- A combined 94% of current staff said, "my immediate supervisor encourages staff to follow the division's program policies and procedures" either "always" or "most of the time".
- The majority of current staff (90%) said that "the standards used to evaluate job performance are fair"
- A majority of current staff (80%) indicated they have "adequate supplies and equipment to do my job".

These are strong examples of a positive agency climate and are not supportive of the audit report's broad assertion of "problems managing staff, workloads, and program operations".

Despite these positive indicators, the Division agrees that ongoing review of employee concerns related to operation and management issues is an essential component of all healthy agencies. This principle of open and respectful communication is at the core of the Division's management approach and guides our meetings between field staff and managers at different levels.

Specifically, DJJ has placed a significant emphasis on communication in the past few years and has been engaged in an array of ongoing improvements aimed at increasing both the frequency and quality of communication with employees and with stakeholders and community-based partners. Some of these are summarized below.

Weekly Senior Manager Meetings: An identified senior managers group comprised of all facility superintendents, regional probation managers and senior positions within the Directors office meets telephonically each week to address statewide policy concerns, system change issues, field probation and facility operational issues and overall management concerns. Once a month this group is broadened to include mid-level supervisors from probation, facilities and the Director's office. This monthly meeting serves as a forum for input into DJJ operational issues and updates regarding system wide changes and initiatives. For both of these meetings, all participants are instructed and expected to share the information discussed with their subordinate staff. Additionally, summary notes are done for these meetings and sent out to all Division staff statewide each week via e-mail.

Probation Managers' Meeting: To encourage improved communication between field probation mid level managers (district office supervisors) and senior managers (regional probation managers), an additional meeting was initiated in November 2004 between these two levels of probation management. This is focused both on addressing concerns related to field operations and service delivery and has also focused on providing a forum for feedback related to concerns about service system gaps and delivery challenges. An additional goal is that this telephonic meeting will serve as a mechanism for field support and a model for mid level managers to use with their direct line staff.

Direct Care Staff Opportunity to Meet with Director and Deputy Directors: To gather feedback directly from front line staff, the Director and two Deputy Directors hold monthly teleconferences with a randomly selected group of approximately 7-9 employees from all facets of the agency, including probation, facilities, administrative support, kitchen staff and maintenance employees. The monthly G.A.B. meeting is an opportunity for employees to take any questions, concerns or feedback directly to the top of the organization without needing to go through supervisory channels. The G.A.B. meeting has been in existence since February of 2000, having been established by the agency's first director. This forum has served as a mechanism to gather information, to follow up on employee concerns about a particular office, practice or policy. It has also enabled the Division to identify trends across offices, regions and time that clearly merit attention as

well as serving as a chance for employees to hear about statewide issues that may not normally come to them in their day to day work.

Performance-Based Standards (PbS) Staff Climate Survey: As a component of the Division's participation in the national performance-based standards (PbS) quality assurance process for juvenile facilities, each DJJ facility staff is provided an anonymous climate survey twice a year. The survey assesses such issues as: adherence to safety and security procedures; number of times a staff has been injured; conditions in the facility for both youths and staff; training adequacy; quality of programming offered; job satisfaction; support from management; communication etc. DJJ has just completed two data collection cycles from this process thus it is too early to draw any significant conclusions. The information, however, will be used to improve working conditions for staff and will be incorporated into both individual facility practices and as appropriate, overall agency policies and practices.

External Stakeholder Communication: The DJJ formed a core stakeholder group in November 2003 as a result of technical assistance from the National Juvenile Detention Association. The group is comprised of a wide array of state and local entities. This list is used for periodic email updates as to Division activities and initiatives, as well as to drive invitations to forums, training and interagency workgroups addressing substantive policy or operational changes. DJJ has been actively engaged with stakeholders throughout the past two years during a significant period of organizational system improvement processes. We are committed to continuing this important process of engaging our external partners in a dialogue of how services to the client and families can be further improved.

Employee Exit Interviews: DJJ completed a draft protocol for employee exit interviews in April 2005. We have piloted this instrument with three employees who have left the Division, all of them senior managers who retired at the end of long careers. Our next planned step is to finalize the instrument by September 30, 2005, along with procedures for employing exit interviews at all levels of the agency. This will be another critical tool for DJJ to use in working toward ongoing agency improvements and ensuring that upper level management is aware of any suggestions, compliments or concerns operationally or managerially. The actual tool is attached to this response for your information.

Given the range of communication venues cited above already in place, coupled with fairly consistent positive ratings on many indicators on the employee survey, DJJ does not agree that there is any necessity to use an additional "impartial" position to gather information related to management practices and operations.

The Division will, however, include as a component in its exit interview protocol, the opportunity for the employee leaving the agency to meet with a third party as an alternative to the immediate supervisor if that is requested. Ongoing review of the information and data obtained from the array of communication venues cited above will

continue to be a priority for DJJ as part of our ongoing commitment to agency quality management.

Recommendation No. 2:

The Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) commissioner should ensure that his managers at OCS and DJJ have the necessary skills and training to provide a positive work environment for their staffs.

We concur with this recommendation.

Office of Children's Services:
OCS has received increased funding in FY06 for training dollars that among other areas will be utilized for improving initial assessment in practice. Training dates have been scheduled and the approach will include mentoring and coaching throughout the year. This change in practice will assist staff in feeling more confident and capable in their daily jobs.

A focus of OCS managers' skill development and training this past year and will be ongoing is in the area of improving management skills. Supervisors have been given management training attached to their regular statewide face-to-face meetings; given an opportunity to practice these skills and discuss them with their peers.

Division of Juvenile Justice:
DJJ concurs with the recommendation, although we strongly disagree with the several conclusions and assertions, which appear to form the basis for the recommendation.

Specifically, there are three strong references made to high turnover in the DJJ sections. As was stated in the response to recommendation #1 above, these multiple references to high rates for DJJ are not consistent with the report's conclusions on page 15 and management findings on page16. In these sections of the report, high turnover is cited as a finding only for the Office of Children's Services and not the Division of Juvenile Justice. As has already been stated above, DJJ considers the rates for both vacancy and turnover for the Division to be quite positive and not an indication of poor management or an unhealthy "control environment".

Further, DJJ indicators in the areas mentioned do not combine to portray the type of environment characterized by this recommendation. In terms of stress, 47% of staff indicate that their job is too stressful "sometimes", whereas 28 % report this to be the case either "hardly ever" or "never". Morale is characterized by 67% of staff as either "excellent" or "good", with a very small percentage of staff (6%) reporting it as "poor". For DJJ, the goal will remain to have the positive indicators at 80% or higher and, as stated in recommendation #1, we will continue to work toward that goal. Data will be

gathered via the Performance-Based Standards (PbS) staff climate survey and via the soon to be implemented exit interview tool and process.

Regarding the audit's suggestion that management positions should be developed into "formal management tracks with specific training, mentors, or apprenticeships" (P. 58), DJJ agrees and has been providing such opportunities. The division has initiated special projects based on agency need and temporarily re-assigned managerial positions for dedicated periods of time to complete these designated projects. This has allowed interested staff in lower level positions the opportunity to rotate into mid and senior managerial positions during these periods. The benefits to all levels of staff have been tremendous and include positive role modeling, mentoring and hands-on training in the "real life" position, while also affording the division an opportunity to efficiently use staff expertise to accomplish work important for the agency.

Lastly, we will also continue to incorporate local, region and statewide incentives to maintain and boost employee morale, based on input from staff and managers. One very positive approach to this is the DJJ "employee of the quarter" program, where each senior manager has the opportunity once per quarter to nominate a line staff or supervisor for this agency recognition. Staff can recommend any level of employee to be nominated based on accomplishments during the particular quarter being reviewed. The recipient receives a plaque and a $50 gift certificate, all of which are paid for by private agency donations. The Division also works hard to recognize individual employees for specific projects or accomplishments that are significant via "on the spot" employee recognitions.

Having presented the Division's concerns, we do agree with the point that training is absolutely essential to ensure that staff working with youths, whether in field probation or in a youth facility, are well equipped to handle the significant and complex responsibilities of their jobs. DJJ does provide core training to all facility staff as well as a comprehensive pre-service orientation and on the job training process for all juvenile probation officers.

It has been more challenging for the Division to provide supervisory and/or management training, primarily due to lack of available time on the part of the employee(s). DJJ has recently requested that all of its mid and senior managers participate in a training titled "Change Management for Supervisors". The pre-requisite for this course is training on performance coaching. These are offered by the Department of Administration, Human Resources. The Division will set as a goal a scheduled completion date for mid level and senior level managers to complete this training by June 30, 2006.

The Division is encouraged by the reference in the management letter that survey respondents comments regarding management styles within DJJ were "…much more positive" (P. 22) and also note that the top four reasons for departure cited by former employees were either person of job-related rather than management issues. As noted above, the need for improved communication has been and will continue to be addressed

through a variety of ongoing processes. DJJ will continue to encourage that supervisors and managers receive relevant and available training within the constraints of time and resources.

Recommendation No. 3:

The DHSS commissioner and OCS deputy commissioner should review the effects of the methods used to implement the social worker licensure requirement.

We concur with this recommendation.

Discussions about the effects of social worker licensure requirement began in the OCS Recruitment and Retention Committee work in 2004. Recommendations were submitted to OCS Leadership in early 2005. The OCS Deputy Commissioner, in consultation with the Management Services Consultant Team, and OCS Senior Leadership Team, began a process to review those recommendations and the effects of the methodology for the implementation of the social worker licensure requirement in June, 2005.

Recommendation No. 4:

The OCS deputy commissioner should monitor the Recruitment and Retention Stipend Program more closely.

We concur with this recommendation.

The OCS Deputy Commissioner reassigned the work to monitor the Recruitment and Retention Stipend Program on July 1, 2005. An OCS program administrator with social work education experience was assigned to oversee (working in tandem with the fiscal manager of this program) the screening and evaluating of potential candidates for the stipend program, working with human resources to monitor applicants for subsequent positions and timely hire of them.

When stipend students default on their contract to pay back funds to OCS, we are pursuing repayment through the fiscal manager. Currently, there are two former employees who are in payback status for the stipend program.

Recommendation No. 5:

Department of Administration (DOA), Division of Personnel, should provide ongoing training for supervisors on performance evaluations.

We concur with this recommendation.

In FY05 the DHSS identified a need to monitor internal evaluation status since reports from Department of Administration-Division of Personnel (DOA-DOP) were not formatted adequately so the department could use them. The department has since set up a new evaluation data base that is prepared from monthly information sent to DHSS from DOA-DOP. Attached is a sample report.

Office of Children's Services:
OCS held a manager's meeting to discuss the mechanics of evaluations with technical assistance from the department's human resources experts. Internal procedures now include a management tool for statewide monitoring of performance evaluations by regional field and central office administrative managers. Ongoing training is provided on an as needed basis.

Division of Juvenile Justice:
DJJ is encouraged by the significant improvement in responses of current versus former employees regarding timeliness of evaluations, with 82% of current employees indicating that they receive their evaluations in a timely manner. The timing of accompanying merit increases mentioned in the management letter is not a function of the Division but handled directly by Payroll, within the Department of Administration. DJJ does agree that timely evaluations are important supervisory and management tools and provide all employees with a mechanism to gauge their performance. DJJ will work closely with DOA to implement mechanisms to ensure that this outcome is improved. DJJ would welcome training on performance evaluations and exit interviews and would encourage supervisors to attend these.

Recommendation No. 6:

The OCS deputy commissioner should analyze the central office staffing to determine if all positions are vital to the effectiveness of the division.

We concur with this recommendation.

The new OCS deputy commissioner is completing an internal review of central office staff and has included regional and field management staff in that process. It is expected that this review will be completed by December 31, 2005.

Recommendation No. 7:

The OCS deputy commissioner and the DJJ director should strengthen oversight of grantees to ensure that services are being provided.

We concur with this recommendation.

In February 2004 all grant administration in the department was consolidated in the Grants and Contracts unit. One of the purposes of this change is to develop efficiencies in grant management so that program managers and coordinators can spend more time on grant outcomes and working with grantees on such things as site review as recommended in the audit.

Office of Children's Services:
OCS instituted an onsite monitoring process in fiscal year 2001, for each grant program including a protocol/onsite evaluation tool in which program coordinators have been trained. A written report is generated from the visit and distributed to each grantee. The frequency of the onsite monitoring visit is determined by the duration of grant period, travel fund availability and grantee performance. The process is reviewed and revised as needed to improve the oversight of OCS grants, including targeted training on specific issues with relationship to individual grant programs to improve service delivery.

In addition to the onsite monitoring process, OCS works closely with the grants/contracts section of the department to ensure timely and efficiency of payment to grantees.

Division of Juvenile Justice:
The Division of Juvenile Justice has been and will continue to review all quarterly program/grant reports on an ongoing basis. As one improvement, DJJ will initiate quarterly meetings with the Grants and Contracts unit to review grantee reports and progress. We believe these meetings will support efficient delivery of services.

In the past two fiscal years, DJJ had a series of staff transitions within the Director's office program unit as well as a reduction in federal funding. The result of these two realities is that there has been a reduction in the ability of the DJJ office to conduct on-site grant reviews to the extent that we would prefer. In spite of these challenges, DJJ has conducted (and will continue) annual on-site grantee monitoring visits with the federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). These site visits are performed in both urban and rural areas and generally include representatives from the congressionally mandated oversight committee (Alaska Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee) and DJJ probation and facility staff.

The provision of community-based services to the youths served by the Division is a high priority and a significant component of the agency's system improvement plan. The DJJ program unit will be engaging in a comprehensive unit planning process in August and early September of 2005. The unit will have a work-plan completed no later than October 1, 2005 that will specify performance standards for grantee on-site visits follow up and plans of correction as necessary and file documentation. These benchmarks will also incorporate frequency of contact between program staff and probation field staff using these services. Changes will be implemented by the second quarter of FY '06 based on this completed work plan. All targets will incorporate the feasibility of meeting the goal

given existing federal funding levels and number of staff. We believe that these improvements will ensure the provision of more consistent and higher-level services to youth in our care and provide the necessary community services to support DJJ field staff.

Recommendation No. 8:

The DHSS commissioner should require OCS to conduct a complete internal review of child fatalities and to provide a corrective action plan, if necessary, from the OCS deputy commissioner to ensure that related systemic, procedural, or personnel issues are improved.

We concur with the recommendation although not necessarily the suggested approach.

As was stated in Management Letter No. 4 Response, the management letter is incorrect in stating that the Evaluation Unit is responsible for reviewing all child fatalities. The Child Fatality Review Team is in the Medical Examiner's Office within the Division of Public Health and reviews all child fatalities. OCS has a representative on that committee, appointed by the Commissioner.

Internal reviews are requested by the Deputy Commissioner as needed on all cases where severe abuse or death has occurred. These reviews are extremely thorough and reports are sent to the Deputy Commissioner and Commissioner. Those reports are protected by Executive Privilege so that people interviewed will know that they can speak the truth without fear of retaliation. The reports are used to assess the effectiveness of current policy and practice and to see if any negligence exists. At this point information contained in all records and reports remains confidential. In addition, a higher level QA team at the Departmental level is under development so that these internal reviews are done outside of the Division. We support this idea.

House Bill 53, signed into law June 30, 2005, made changes in the child protection confidentiality statutes to allow OCS and the Commissioner to disclose limited information to the public. The new law allows information to be provided to the public in three instances, the last of which is when a report of harm involves a fatality or near fatality of a child. This allows DHSS to explain whether the department considered the report of harm valid, and what it did in response to the investigation.

Recommendation No. 9:

The OCS deputy commissioner should eliminate the use of the Anchorage informal licensing action committee.

We disagree with this recommendation.

As stated in Management Letter No. 4, the licensing action committee has advisory authority only and is used to assure that all aspects of a case are considered. It does not prohibit the appeal of any licensing action.

We are undergoing a major change in the entire foster care licensing process at OCS. A pilot project was conducted in Anchorage utilizing the Resource Family Assessment (RFA) process. Essentially, RFA involves assessing potential foster families for their suitability in a more intensive way than in the past. As a result of this pilot, OCS will be implementing the RFA on a statewide basis in the coming months.

Recommendation No. 10:

The OCS deputy commissioner should strengthen the supervisory case review process.

We concur with this recommendation.

The Statewide Quality Assurance Unit has been fully operational since November 2004 with four reviewers who sample cases monthly and conduct field office reviews utilizing the instrument that the federal reviewers use. Results of reviews are reported to managers and supervisors who feedback that information to workers to improve practice.

In addition to the Quality Assurance Unit, the current supervisory case review section of policy and procedure has been updated and divided into two subsections: case staffing meetings and case record review.

Supervisory Case Review
The supervisors will have regular meetings with their staff to review cases, and if a meeting must be cancelled it must occur the following week. Prior to in-home and permanency case closure requests, the worker and supervisor will staff the case to review the closure request and discuss the safety and risks levels. The procedures for documentation of the case staffing meetings have been updated to reflect the implementation of ORCA.

Case Record Review
Supervisors will review the case record for in-home cases at least every three months and at closure. Permanency cases will be reviewed at least every six months and at closure. At least 50% of the investigation workers' cases will be reviewed at closure of the investigation. The procedures for documentation of case record reviews have been revised to reflect changes in the supervisory case record review form. The completed forms will be forwarded to the statewide Evaluation Unit for tabulation and reporting to the regional offices.

Recommendation No. 11:

The OCS deputy commissioner should ensure that adequate funds are allocated for regional management and supervisors to visit the field offices they oversee.

We concur with the recommendation within the limits of the OCS appropriation.

Each field office was visited by supervisors at least twice during FY2005. Telephonic supervision occurs weekly between supervisors and workers who are separated by distance and geography. Managers meet weekly either onsite or by telephone with each supervisor.

Recommendation No. 12:

The OCS deputy commissioner should develop an updated workload measurement model.

In FY05 the OCS entered into a workload study contract with a nationally-recognized expert, HornbyZeller Associates, Inc., that will provide results about current workload and recommendations for systemic changes to workload. The study will be completed by December, 2005 and recommendations implemented beginning in January, 2006.

Recommendation #13:

The DJJ director should ensure that policy standards are met.

We concur with the recommendation, and have been working to reallocate existing system resources so that policy standards may be met.

We are pleased with the audit's assertion that it would be inaccurate to say that DJJ is providing substandard services to clients, specifically noting "no file appeared blatantly negligent or caused us to question a decision made" (p. 70). The Division agrees that the majority of the error rates noted as a result of the case file audit need to be improved. That said, it is important to note that, due to the nature of field probation work and ongoing resource challenges, meeting policy standards 100% of the time is an unrealistic goal and unlikely to be achievable.

Workload issues continue to challenge DJJ's ability to meet all mandated standards for field probation. Probation employee survey results support this, with 44% of probation officers saying that there are insufficient numbers of employees to perform the job (p. 42). The Division received 11 new positions in the FY '06 budget, 7 juvenile probation officers and 4 regional social service associates who will focus on victims' service issues. While these positions are expected to ease the workload in the most severely strained offices and assist the Division in meeting its policy standards, we still anticipate the need

to prioritize probation policy standards and identify desired benchmarks against which to measure ongoing progress.

DJJ has been engaged in a comprehensive system improvement effort aimed at creating a more fully balanced juvenile justice continuum. One of the anticipated results is a reduction and stabilization in the use of secure institutional care and a reinvestment of these resources into field probation and community-based alternatives. This is a critical first step in ensuring that sufficient resources exist to meet the required case management standards in both intake and ongoing probation supervision, however this is a long-term process that will not happen overnight.

The Division has implemented several changes in the past year and a half aimed at ensuring a higher quality juvenile justice system that is based increasingly on objective, data-driven decision-making. A risk-based detention assessment instrument (DAI) was implemented in November 2003, and the Division is also in the early stages of implementing a well-validated research-based risk assessment tool (the Youth Level of Service Inventory or YLS) to replace the existing instrument that guides case planning (referenced in the audit as risk/need assessment). Implementation of such research-based tools will assist the Division in enhancing its internal control environment and ensuring that policy standards are met. More comprehensive information on DJJ's system improvement efforts may be found in the DJJ System Improvements Report (Fiscal Years 2004 and 2005), which is posted on our agency web site at www.hss.state.ak.us/djj/

Regarding the Division's Juvenile Offender Management Information System (JOMIS), we believe that JOMIS will continue to enable DJJ to make important case specific decisions based on data. Still a relatively new system, having gone "live" on April 20, 2002, JOMIS has demonstrated significant utility in its very short lifespan. The indicators cited on p. 43 note that "data recorded in JOMIS was inaccurate in 6% of the intake and probation cases reviewed". The converse statement, that JOMIS data was reported accurately in 94% of the cases reviewed, is a significant and positive accomplishment worth noting. The audit (p. 43) indicates that in about "19% of the case files, not all data was entered into JOMIS". Again, conversely, this means that all data was entered into JOMIS in 81% of the case files-- a strong majority of the cases and a significant accomplishment for a new MIS system.

The focus for JOMIS the past three years has been on ensuring that all staff are adequately trained and proficient in JOMIS and that ongoing database updates and newly implemented modules are incorporated into the daily use of the system by all staff. The Division acknowledges that there remains a significant amount of additional work to be done to utilize JOMIS more fully. The division has identified the implementation of agency management reports to capture critical data for supervisory staff and the implementation of new functions to support the Division's implementation of Performance-Based Standards (PbS) for DJJ facilities as high priorities. These steps will improve DJJ's ability to meet policy standards.

DJJ is in the process of finalizing a JOMIS Phase II work plan that will contain targeted goals, completion dates and persons responsible. It is anticipated that this plan will be finalized by October 15, 2005, with dates of completion spanning through the remainder of FY ’06 into all of FY ’07. Data integrity issues are an expectation for all new MIS systems. DJJ will continue to emphasize the need for adherence to required data fields and plans on incorporating data integrity issues into the above-mentioned JOMIS Phase II plan.

Lastly, we anticipate implementing the consistent recording of community work service in JOMIS in the coming fiscal year. There are, however, a number of JOMIS modules that will not be implemented due to lack of identifiable resources, including the tracking mechanism for restitution. The Division does currently track this data manually for its performance measures for the Alaska Legislature. We are extremely diligent about collection and reporting of this information and are not aware of any flaws in this data.

Recommendation #14:

The DJJ regional managers should ensure quarterly intake and probation case reviews are performed as required.

We concur with the recommendation, recognizing the challenges inherent in the ongoing struggle to balance service provision with appropriate quality assurance activities.

As has already been stated above, DJJ had insufficient staff resources in field probation during the period audited. This lack of juvenile probation staff contributed significantly to the inability of the agency to ensure that quarterly intake and probation case audits were maintained according to policy. For the offices receiving new probation officers this fiscal year (FY ’06), some of the immediate challenges regarding service delivery should be reduced.

The Division agrees that quarterly audits must be performed as a minimum assurance that service standards related to the delivery of probation services are followed. DJJ has made progress in this area, having adopted a new performance measure for field probation beginning with the last two quarters of fiscal year 2004. The indicator is “improve the Division’s success in achieving compliance with audit guidelines for juvenile probation officers as specified in the DJJ field probation policy and procedure manual” and the desired performance target is “all field probation units will achieve an average of 95% compliance with all probation audit standards for each one-year period measured.” Results for the quarters measured were 93.2 % and 94.5 % compliance, slightly less than the desired benchmark.

The Division’s emphasis on agency-wide system improvements and the additional commensurate work required of DJJ staff and managers have, in some ways, exacerbated

existing resource issues. The agency's improvements and investment in data-driven decision-making have made it more apparent that the Division needs to implement an agency wide quality assurance process to ensure adherence to policies and provision of quality care to youth. To partially address this need, we have created a single statewide position of program coordinator to focus on development, implementation and coordination of quality assurance functions for DJJ. This position, however, will be initially focused on ensuring successful implementation of Performance-Based Standards (PbS), a nationally recognized ongoing quality assurance process for DJJ facilities.

A comprehensive quality assurance process would improve the Division's ability to ensure that it is meeting its mission of offender accountability, community protection and competency development. While the statewide position cited above is a good beginning, there remains a strong need for additional resource to more consistently and appropriately focus on statewide quality assurance for both facilities and for field probation. DJJ will explore the development of a broader quality assurance program, although given the constraints of existing resources, expansion of this function may not be feasible.

Recommendation #15:

The director of DJJ should ensure that training levels are met.

We concur with the recommendation, with the following clarifications.

The Division's management decision not to seek accreditation for probation field services has not been accompanied by a reduction of resources from training to other areas. DJJ continues to provide training of trainers on a statewide basis for both probation field staff and juvenile facility staff in order to ensure adequate internal capacity for training in both non-violent client management and physical intervention and arrest procedures. Although the *availability* of training for probation staff in client control tactics remained constant during the period of time reviewed (FY '01 through FY '03) there was a reduction in the number of probation officers who participated in these trainings, with a significant drop off in participation rates from FY '01 to FY '02. Reasons for the reduced JPO participation in these trainings is unclear, although we believe it may be attributable to both staff shortages (thus, fewer staff available to participate in training) and less attention to keeping accurate training records.

Ensuring that field probation officers are adequately equipped to do their jobs is a high priority for the agency. DJJ management will work closely with regional and local staff to ensure that field probation training records are kept up to date and training documentation is accurate, with specific attention paid to mandatory training topics. DJJ agrees with the audit's point that training should be based on "best-practice criteria" (P. 72) and convened a statewide committee in January 2005 to review core services and accompanying training needs for juvenile probation. The work of this committee is being guided by research and national best practice, with the goal of ensuring that JPO's

receive the training they need to do their jobs. Committee recommendations are anticipated to be completed by January 15, 2006.

Regarding the audit's expressed concern about the possibility that JPO's "readiness to restrain, arrest or manage juveniles may be decreasing" (P. 45), the Division is not aware of a reduction in officer ability, readiness or skill level to address behavior of juveniles on probation. As was noted in an earlier management letter on this topic, both Alaska statutes and DJJ field probation policies emphasize informal approaches and diversion from the formal court system if this can be done consistent with agency responsibility for protection of the public. DJJ's system improvement effort is working to provide support for Juvenile probation officers so that they have a range of alternative graduated incentives and sanctions for offenders when they violate their probation. This is critical for the development and support of a juvenile justice system that provides a full service continuum rather than relying on arrest and detention as a default response to less serious re-offending. The need for a full graduated sanctions continuum is well documented and consistent with juvenile justice best practice literature.

Recommendation No. 16:

The DHSS commissioner should ensure that policies and procedures for reporting abuse and neglect of delinquent youth in state custody are clarified and implemented on a statewide basis.

We concur with the recommendation.

The Division of Juvenile Justice will review its existing policies and procedures regarding the reporting of abuse or neglect of delinquent youth and ensure that a single statewide policy for all youth facilities is implemented on a consistent and statewide basis by October 1, 2005. This DJJ policy will be coordinated with the Office of Children's Services to ensure that all regions of OCS have a single statewide policy regarding responses to allegations of abuse or neglect within a juvenile facility. Any existing interagency protocols being used by either Division will also be reviewed to ensure compliance with existing statutes regarding child abuse reporting and to ensure statewide and consistent implementation.

Recommendation No. 17:

The DHSS commissioner should provide training related to reports of abuse or neglect of delinquent youth in state custody, as required by statute.

We concur with the recommendation.

The Department is aware of the critical need across the Department of Health and Social Services for all employees who are mandatory reporters to receive training on the recognition and reporting of child abuse and neglect.

The Office of Children's Services staffs a task force known as the Children's Justice Act Task Force that is a multi-disciplinary group comprised of representatives from OCS, DJJ, the Judiciary, State and Local law enforcement and private providers. The Justice Act Task Force is in the process of finalizing a curriculum on recognition, response and reporting of child abuse and neglect. The curriculum is in the process of being finalized by the Department. Once approved, the task force will work with a contractor to put the material on a CD. Once completed, this training will be made available to all mandatory reporters within the Department and a copy will be sent to the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault as required by AS 47.17. The anticipated completion date for this final step is November 30, 2005.

Recommendation No. 18:

The Office of the Governor and DHSS commissioner should ensure that travel policies and procedures are understood and enforced at all levels within the department.

We concur with this recommendation, but disagree with many of the statements and conclusions concerning management travel.

The auditor used exhibits on page 49 and 50 as factual evidence that some management trips were of marginal benefit and did not benefit the state. As stated earlier it is questionable for the auditor to substitute their judgment as to whether a particular trip was beneficial four years after the fact. All of the trips in exhibit 15 on page 49 were made for state business reasons and the auditor provides no evidence to the contrary.

Also, it is not appropriate to use comparisons among Commissioners in how much time they spend in one location or another and then use that information to imply that business related travel is not appropriate. To assert as is done in exhibit 16 that it is somehow "bad" for commissioners to spend time in communities other than Juneau does not recognize the validity of traveling throughout the state. Commissioners are often directed by the Governor or Chief of staff to attend department and community events in various locations throughout the state. These types of assignments often match the specific talents, local community ties and duties for that individual and should not be unfairly criticized without specific evidence of wrong-doing. Sometimes the travel is at the request of legislators or community leaders outside of Juneau who seek involvement of the Administration.

The comments on page 50 are also troubling because the auditor asserts that because certain management employees have second residences in Anchorage that any travel to

that city over a weekend somehow makes the travel "marginal or unnecessary." The audit provides no evidence to substantiate these statements.

In addition, the auditor noted improvement in many areas in the review of FY03 travel, but that improvement is not highlighted in the findings or recommendations.

If you have any questions concerning this letter, please feel free to contact Patty Ware at 465-2112 or Tammy Sandoval at 465-3011 or Janet Clarke at 465-1630.

Sincerely,

Joel Gilbertson
Commissioner

JSG:lb

DHSS - Evaluation Due Date Information

Supervisor PCN and Name **060500** [redacted]

FMS Asst Commissioner's Office

Overdue	Eval Date	NAME	Stat	RD Code	EE Num	Seas	MAD	PCN	BU	Loc	Range	Step	Class
No		Vacant FMS Asst Commissioner's Office						063004					
No		Vacant FMS Asst Commissioner's Office						021811					
Yes	2/16/2005	[redacted]	PE	06800	[redacted]	FR	2/16/2007	060011	GG	AWA	21	G	P1464
Yes	2/23/2005	[redacted]	PR	06800	[redacted]	FR	9/16/2006	060617	SS	AWA	25	F	P1644
Yes	3/16/2005	[redacted]	PE	06800	[redacted]	FR	3/16/2008	060114	SS	AWA	22	M	P2294
Yes	3/16/2005	[redacted]	PE	06800	[redacted]	FR	3/16/2008	060222	SS	AWA	21	K	P1293
Yes	7/16/2005	[redacted]	PE	06800	[redacted]	FR	7/16/2005	060044	GP	AWA	13	C	P1906
Yes	7/16/2005	[redacted]	PE	06800	[redacted]	FR	7/16/2005	060052	SS	AWA	22	D	P1931
No	7/24/2005	[redacted]	EX	06800	[redacted]	FR	2/1/2006	060616	XE	AWA	22	E	X1260
No	8/16/2005	[redacted]	PE	06800	[redacted]	FR	8/16/2005	060093	SS	AWA	22	E	P1465
No	8/16/2005	[redacted]	PE	06800	[redacted]	FR	8/16/2006	060057	SS	AWA	22	F	P1208
No	5/16/2006	[redacted]	PR	06800	[redacted]	FR	5/16/2006	060066	SS	AWA	22	F	P1931

Division of Juvenile Justice
Employee Exit Interview

Employee's Name:	Date:
Job Title:	Dates of Employment:
Supervisor:	Interviewer:

1. What is your primary reason for leaving DJJ? (Please circle)

health concerns	personal reasons	continue education	retirement	family responsibilities
If – to accept other employment: ⟶	promotion/career advancement	work schedule	better pay, benefits or work environment	involuntary termination
If – moving to: ⟶	accept other employment	relocate	family reasons	other:

2. What did you like about working for the Division of Juvenile Justice?

3. What did you like least about working for the Division of Juvenile Justice?

4. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the agency?

5. What would make the Division of Juvenile Justice a better place to work?

6. Do you have any suggestions for restructuring your position for the next person?

7. Do you believe management adequately recognized employee contributions?

8. Do you think your training was adequate?

9. Were you content with your working conditions?

10. Do you have any suggestions for improving employee morale?

11. What was the best part of your job here?

Please answer the following questions by scoring as: bad 1 - poor 2 - fair 3 - good 4 - excellent 5	
1. I had a good working relationship with co-workers.	1 2 3 4 5
2. I had a good working relationship with my supervisor	1 2 3 4 5
3. Upper management performs well for the Division.	1 2 3 4 5
4. Training or job development met expectations.	1 2 3 4 5
5. Work Assignments were distributed evenly.	1 2 3 4 5
6. I had a clear understanding of my job duties.	1 2 3 4 5
7. Working conditions met expectations.	1 2 3 4 5
8. Security arrangements are appropriate at DJJ.	1 2 3 4 5
9. There were opportunities for growth and development.	1 2 3 4 5
10. There were opportunities for transfer or promotion.	1 2 3 4 5
11. The pay was fair for the work required.	1 2 3 4 5
12. My work schedule met my needs.	1 2 3 4 5
13. I thought my job helped the youth we work with.	1 2 3 4 5
14. I think the Division is effective in working with the youth we serve.	1 2 3 4 5
15. I believe the division is meeting its mission to hold offenders accountable, promote the safety of communities & victims, and assists offenders to develop necessary skills.	1 2 3 4 5
16. Overall, I was satisfied with my job.	1 2 3 4 5

Are there any other comments you would like to make?

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August 15, 2005

Members of the Legislative Budget
and Audit Committee

We have reviewed the responses to our preliminary audit report on the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS), Division of Family and Youth Services (DFYS), Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) and Office of the Commissioner. Nothing contained in these responses gives us cause to reconsider the report conclusions or findings. However, we want to provide the following additional comments related to DHSS' response:

Audit Standards —

Throughout the audit, both informal and formal communications occurred between the audit team and departmental staff. These meetings and letters keep the department apprised on the issues and findings that are identified during the course of the audit. These on-going communications allowed management to provide feedback to the auditors, as well as, providing management an opportunity to initiate corrective actions.

The scope of the audit is established by the requesting legislator and approved by the Legislative Budget and Audit Committee. Each audit is conducted in accordance with the generally accepted government auditing standards. Our quality assurance procedures include multi-level reviews of the workpapers, management letters, and reports. In addition, we receive an independent peer review through the National Association of State Auditors every three years. The related opinions for each of the past peer reviews are available at our website, www.legaudit.state.ak.us.

Employee Survey —

The comments from the employee survey in Exhibit 3, on page 17 of the report, are representative of recurring and similar comments from multiple respondents. The employee survey had two open-ended questions for both the former and current employees. Comments were written under at least one of these questions by 141 DFYS former employees and

238 DFYS current employees. Unfortunately, the large majority of the comments were of a critical nature.

Recommendation No. 1

The Office of Children's Services (OCS) deputy commissioner and the Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) director should address employee concerns related to the operation and management of their respective divisions.

Recommendation No. 2

The Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) commissioner should endure that his managers at OCS and DJ have the necessary stills and training to provide a positive work environment for their staffs.

DFYS caseworkers certainly had higher turnover rates than did DJJ juvenile probation officers; however, the turnover rate for DJJ almost doubled in the rural offices between FY 00 and FY 03. Both divisions, though to a lesser extent DJJ, need to address the issue of employee turnover. While usage of the adjective *high* in regards to turnover for DJJ may be debated, we reaffirm our recommendations.

Recommendation No. 8

The DHSS commissioner should require OCS to conduct a complete internal review of child fatalities and to provide a corrective action plan, if necessary, from the OCS deputy commissioner to ensure that related systemic, procedural, or personnel issues are improved.

We would like to clarify our recommendation on internal reviews of child fatalities by DHSS. The issue is not about the Child Fatality Review Team. Rather, the issue is OCS' adherence to the *Child Protective Services Manual*, Section 6.1.12(e) dated October 2001, which requires OCS to perform an additional review of "*deaths of all children who were in DHSS custody at the time of death and all children who have had prior contact with the division*."

Subsequent to communicating this recommendation to OCS, OCS rewrote Section 6.1.12 to require internal reviews at the discretion of the OCS deputy commissioner. This revised policy was effective June 1, 2004. In addition, the legislature enacted Chapter 64, SLA 2005 (House Bill 53) which established a Citizen Review Panel for additional external oversight of DHSS.

As we recommended, there is a need for more thorough reviews of fatality cases of children that were in custody of the State or had received services from OCS, including interviews of pertinent people, such as social workers, licensing specialists, teachers, foster parents, biological parents, police officers, treatment specialists, doctors, and service providers. As with the newly developed federal reviews, this approach will assist in identifying systemic problems that need to be addressed by OCS. In addition, there is a need for oversight to ensure that OCS develops a corrective plan, where appropriate, in response to findings and recommendations of such reviews.

Recommendation No. 18

The Office of the Governor and DHSS commissioner should ensure that travel policies and procedures are understood and enforced at all levels within the department.

The criteria used to evaluate travel of DHSS upper-management personnel was to determine whether the "*travel was clearly necessary to benefit the state,*"[1] rather than if they were traveling for state business. Unfortunately, the management control of preapproval for travel of upper-management personnel was frequently not obtained.

In summary we reaffirm the appropriateness of the audit process and the conclusions and recommendations made in this report.

Sincerely,

Pat Davidson
Legislative Auditor

[1] AS 39.20.140 (a).

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