



OAG

Office of the Auditor General

Report Summary

Performance Audit

Monitoring of Selected Child Welfare Caseloads

Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS)

Report Number:
431-2785-18

Released:
June 2021

The MDHHS Children's Services Agency administers the State's child welfare programs and has established caseload maximums for over 4,000 child welfare staff who perform critical tasks related to children's protective services (CPS), foster care, adoption, and child welfare licensing. These staff are located throughout the State in local MDHHS county offices and private child placing agencies and were providing services for approximately 13,000 CPS cases, 13,000 foster care children, 7,500 licensed foster home providers, and 3,000 children in adoption cases during our audit period.

Audit Objective			Conclusion
Objective: To assess the sufficiency of MDHHS's central office efforts to monitor selected child welfare staff caseloads.			Moderately Sufficient
Findings Related to This Audit Objective	Material Condition	Reportable Condition	Agency Preliminary Response
Local child welfare agencies do not report to MDHHS's central office their corrective actions to address caseload issues identified in weekly reports, such as cases without an assigned primary caseworker. We noted that 40% of cases sampled without an assigned primary caseworker remained so for an average of 15 weeks (Finding #1).	X		Disagrees
Nearly 50% of sampled child welfare staff worked on case assignments that MDHHS did not count when assessing caseloads and compliance with MDHHS's established caseload limits (Finding #2).	X		Disagrees
A notable portion of child welfare staff responding to our survey indicated that case assignments were inappropriately moved between caseworkers for the sole purpose of enhancing caseload compliance rates; however, MDHHS's central office did not periodically analyze case movement to address this risk (Finding #3).	X		Agrees

Findings Related to This Audit Objective (Continued)	Material Condition	Reportable Condition	Agency Preliminary Response
MDHHS had not developed procedures for conducting Statewide trend analyses that could enhance its ability to detect pervasive caseload issues, distinguish and share best practices, and identify emerging caseload issues (<u>Finding #4</u>).		X	Agrees

Obtain Audit Reports

Online: audgen.michigan.gov

Phone: (517) 334-8050

Office of the Auditor General
201 N. Washington Square, Sixth Floor
Lansing, Michigan 48913

Doug A. Ringler, CPA, CIA
Auditor General

Laura J. Hirst, CPA
Deputy Auditor General