

SOCIAL SERVICES AGENCY

Department of Children and Family Services' (DCFS') Status Update #7 on the Findings of the State Auditor's Report to the Joint Committee on Legislative Audits

Guided by Collaboration, Continuous Quality Improvement, and Transparency

Alameda County Board of Supervisors' Social Services Committee Meeting

March 23, 2026

Presented by:

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AGENDA



- **Review of the 2024-108 Audit Report Timeline**
 - California Department of Social Services (CDSS) On-site Visit
- **Updates to Information Disseminated at the 3/14/26 Task Force Meeting**
 - Dashboard Transparency and Data Integrity
 - Accountability Mechanisms
 - Emergency Response (ER) Unit Timeliness/Backlog of Open Referrals
 - Emergency Response (ER) Daily Staffing Averages
 - Emergency Response (ER) Unit
 - Emergency Response Unit (ERU) Workflow
 - Emergency Response Unit Overtime
 - Training Capacity
 - Placement Capacity
 - Placement Capacity-Recruitment & Kin Placements
 - Documentation, Court Reports, and Quality of Notes
 - Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)/Agreements
 - Hiring (Bachelor's and Master's Level)

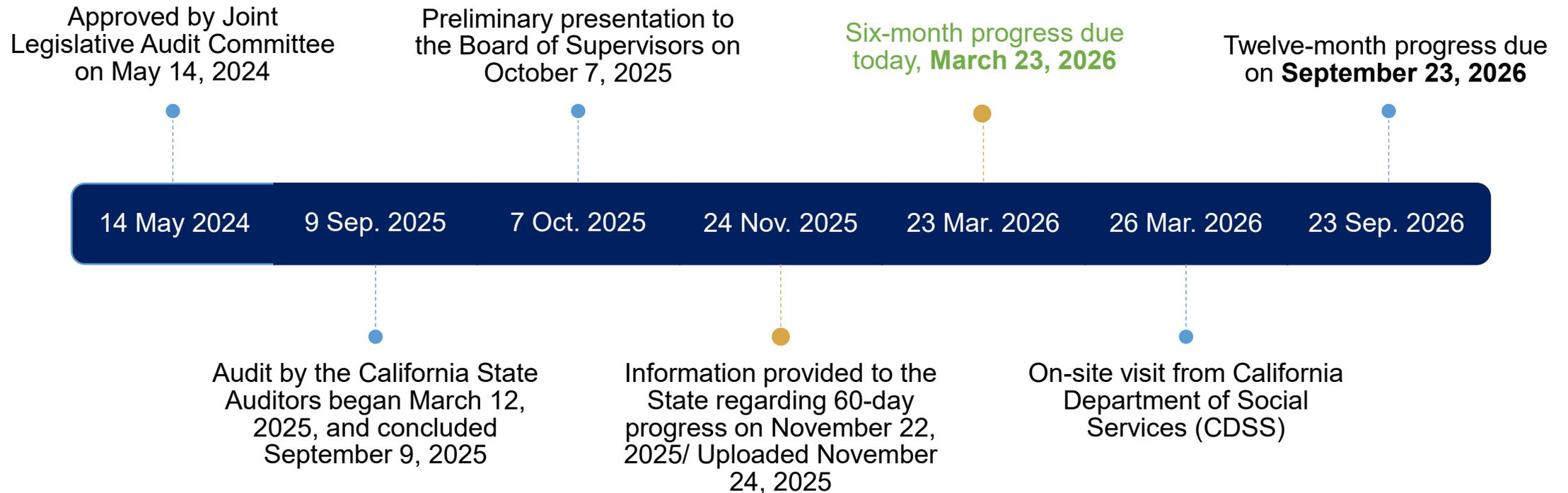


AGENDA



- **Follow Up from Previous Task Force Meeting**
 - Agreed upon deliverables
- **Updates to the California State Auditor's Office**
- **Status of Implementation of Recommendations**

Review of the 2024-108 Audit Report Timeline



California Department of Social Services (CDSS) On-site Visit Scheduled for Friday, March 26th, 2026

- The purpose of this on-site visit is to review child welfare program activity in Alameda County.
- During the on-site visit, CDSS may:
 - Perform case reviews during the site visit.
 - Conduct interviews and focus groups with DCFS staff, including management.
 - Hold entrance and exit conferences.
 - Focus reviews and interviews on county practices, including:
 - Timely response to alleged child abuse
 - Prompt delivery of services to foster youth
 - Timely and accurate documentation of service delivery
- Following the completion of the review, the Department will receive a Report of Findings and Recommendations for review and response.

Updates to Information Disseminated at the 3/14/26 Task Force Meeting - Dashboard Transparency and Data Integrity

Dashboard Transparency and Data Integrity

- The dashboard is primarily powered by data that has been extracted from CWS/CMS via one of three tools.
 - SafeMeasures reports developed by Evident Change
 - Internally developed reports querying CWS/CMS utilizing Business Objects
 - Reports developed by the California Child Welfare Indicators Project (CCWIP)
- Data is refreshed monthly for most metrics.
- Public Dashboard verbiage has been updated.

Updates to Information Disseminated at the 3/14/26 Task Force Meeting - Accountability Mechanisms

Policy Driver

- January 2026 Meet and Confer process.
- A training plan was developed for new CWWs in ER.
- Discussion includes appropriate monitoring and review of staff's work in ER.

Opportunities

- Formalize the number of initial CW investigations.
- Twice monthly supervision with conference memorandum's; ongoing monitoring of referrals progress & timeliness towards closure; utilization of SafeMeasures for compliance issues; review of staff's performance in Children & Family Team meetings.

Accountability Goals

- Expanded training for CWWs.
- Ensure consistency in field oversight.
- Compliance with State mandates.

Updates to Information Disseminated at the 3/14/26 Task Force Meeting - Emergency Response (ER) Unit - Timeliness/Backlog of Open Referrals

Backlog of Open Referrals

- The Department currently has ~1639 open referrals; 229 pending approvals
- There are five open referrals, pending closure, from 2021 that are under review by a Retired Annuitant.
- About 50% of referrals with no contacts are assigned to people who resigned or are out on leave.
- There are approximately 984 referrals without contacts.
 - A referral without contacts does not mean an investigation has not begun.
 - Completion of an investigation involves field work accompanied by entering documentation, including all contact notes in the case management system

Updates to Information Disseminated at the 3/14/26 Task Force Meeting - Emergency Response (ER) Unit - Timeliness/Backlog of Open Referrals *Continued*

0-30 days
Immediate
133

0-30 days
10-day
179

31-60 days
Immediate
58

31-60 days
10-day
153

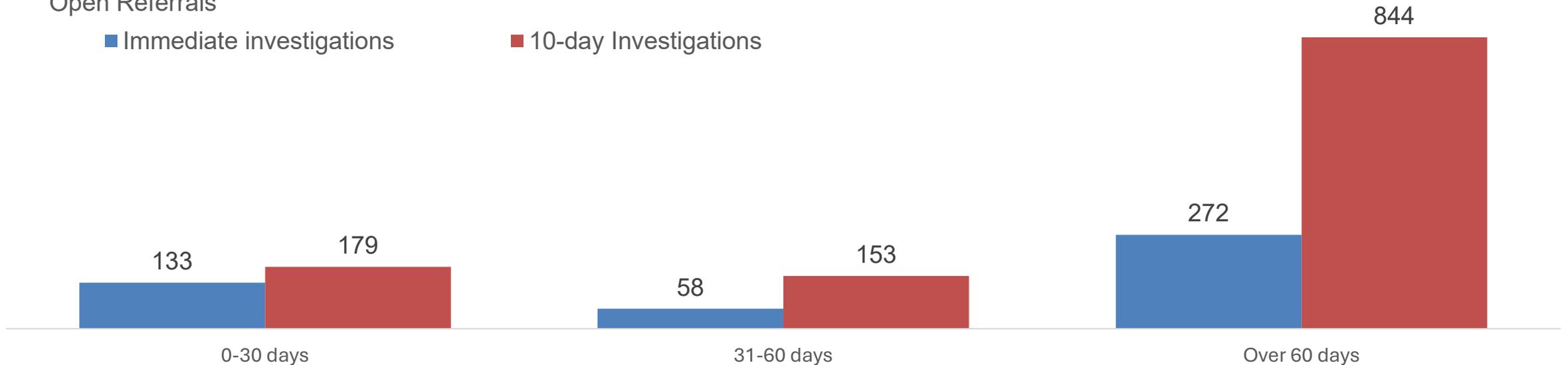
Over 60
Immediate
272

Over 60
10-day
844

Open Referrals

■ Immediate investigations

■ 10-day Investigations



Updates to Information Disseminated at the 3/14/26 Task Force Meeting - Emergency Response (ER) Unit - Daily Staffing Averages

Emergency Response (ER) Daily Staffing Averages

- Daily ER capacity fluctuates between ~10–14 active workers across shifts.
- December 2025 (20), January 2026 (15), and February 2026 (11).

Updates to Information Disseminated at the 3/14/26 Task Force Meeting - Emergency Response (ER) Unit

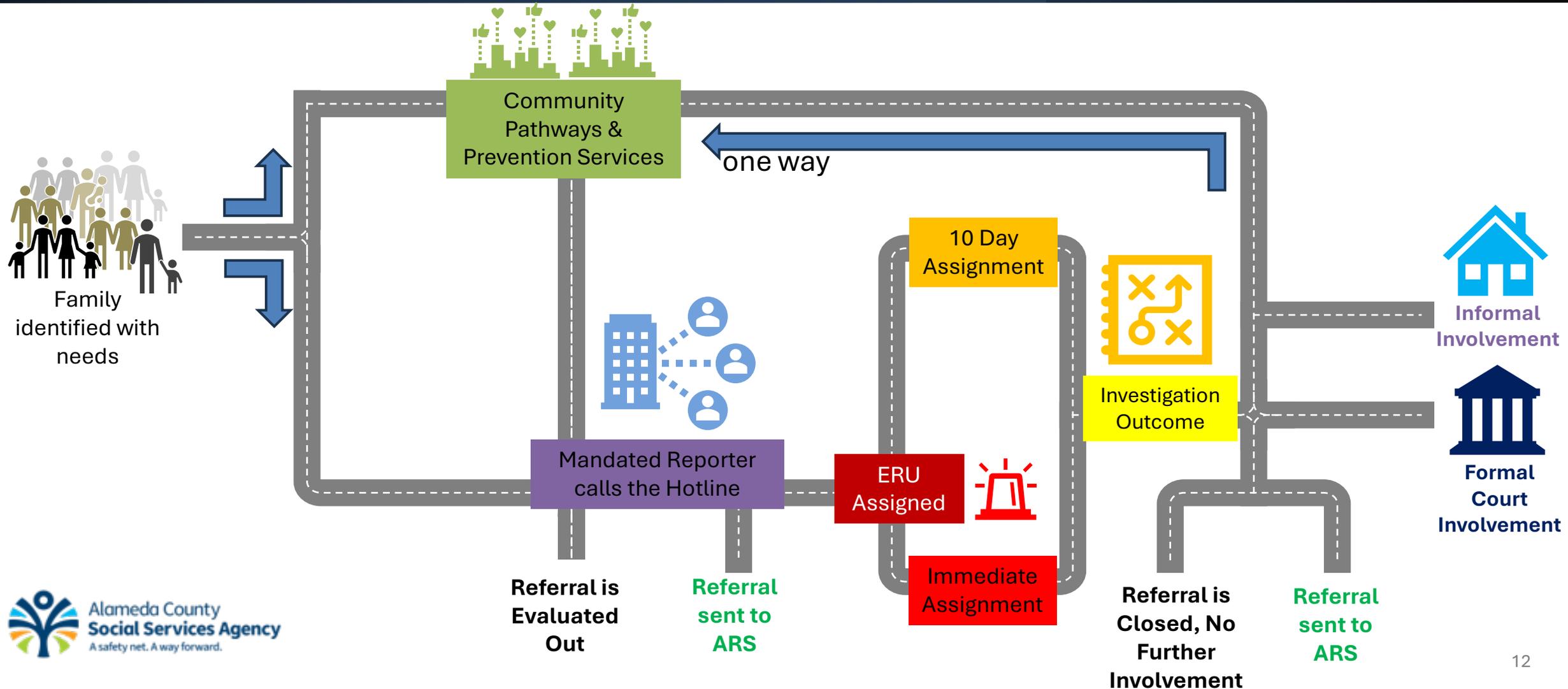
Dedicated Time (DT)

- Supervisors and CWW's develop plans for how they will use their DT
- 10-day attempts, as they allow for more timing
- Ensure all contact notes are current

Percentage of Time on In-Person Response vs Documentation:

- When completing an investigation, CWW's in ERU tend to spend about 1/3 of their time in the field interviewing, and about 2/3 of the time is spent on documentation.

Updates to Information Disseminated at the 3/14/2026 Task Force Meeting - Emergency Response Unit (ERU) - Workflow



Updates to Information Disseminated at the 3/14/26 Task Force Meeting - Emergency Response Unit - Overtime

Overtime Hours

Sep 2025 to Feb 2026

GRAND TOTAL

1,732.5

Hours across six months

OVERTIME

1,023.3

59% of total hours

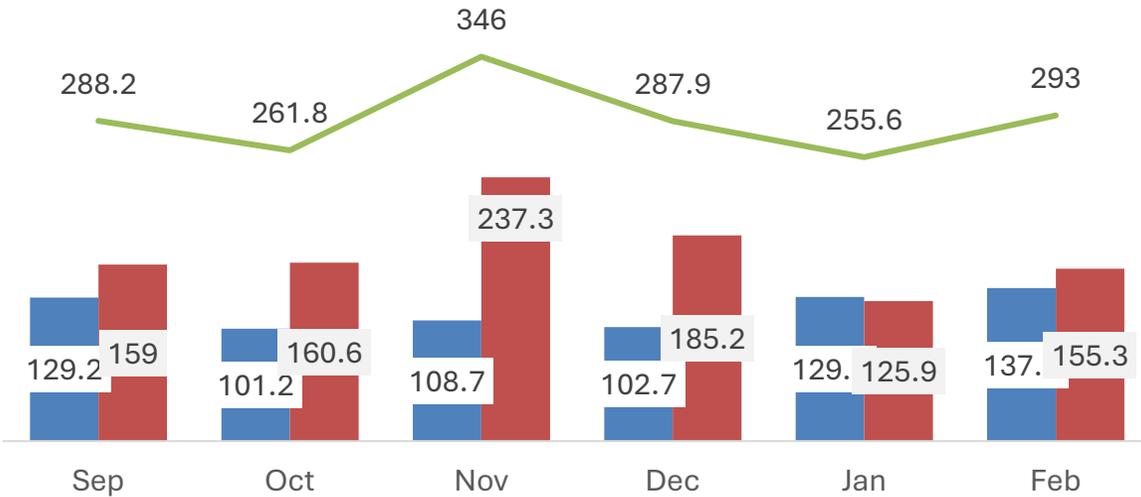
COMP TIME

709.2

41% of total hours

Monthly Breakdown

Comp Time Overtime Total



Callback on SBY/CB (ERUB) & Standby

Sep 2025 to Feb 2026

Grand Total

9,027

Hours across six months

CALLBACK SBY/CB

6,134

68% of total hours

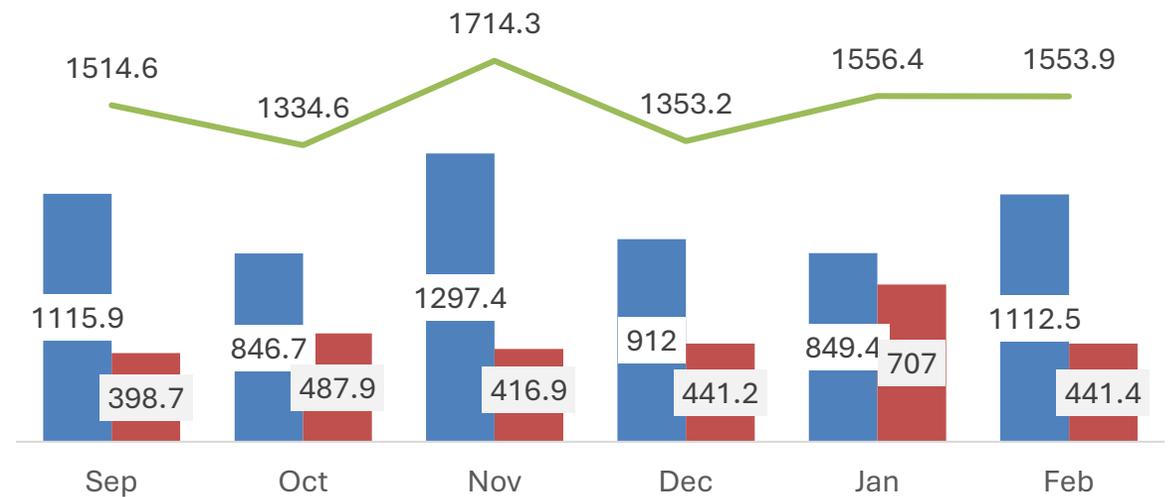
STANDBY

2,893

32% of total hours

Monthly Breakdown

Callback on SBY/CB (ERUB) Standby Total



Updates to Information Disseminated at the 3/14/26 Task Force Meeting - Training Capacity

Who is Authorized to Train/Coach and Develop ERU Staff

- Staff Development Specialists facilitate 12 weeks of state-mandated, county, and program-specific training.
- Staff Development Specialists assigned to DCFS receive a pay differential for supervision and evaluation of induction participants.
- ACSSA's training and onboarding for DCFS is aligned with regional best practices.
- CW Supervisors coach Child Welfare Workers regarding 10-day and Immediate investigations, increasing severity of maltreatment types in accordance with skill/ability progression.

Updates to Information Disseminated at the 3/14/26 Task Force Meeting - Placement Capacity

- We anticipate a soft opening of the Transitional Shelter Care Facility (TrSCF) on March 27, 2026.
- Alameda County has 477 approved Resource Family Homes, which includes relatives, friends of the family, and community homes. There is also additional capacity from our Foster Family Agency (FFA) partners.
- Additional family-based resource family homes are needed. We have approximately **928** children and young adults in out-of-home care:
 - **697** children (0-17)
 - **231** young adults (18-20)
- Homes are needed to accommodate different ages, sibling sets, language, special needs, geography, and recruitment efforts continue. However, some of these children are placed in different levels of care that best meet their needs.

Updates to Information Disseminated at the 3/14/26 Task Force Meeting - Placement Capacity - Recruitment & Kin Placements

- Alameda County participates in many community-based recruitment events. From the beginning of the year until now the county's recruiter and volunteers have participated in 6 events. There are 14 additional community recruitment events scheduled through the end of the year.
- Alameda County continues to invest in Relative and Kin placements and is a participant in the state in KinFirst Accelerator efforts. Data shows that placement with relatives and kin offer the best outcomes for system involved youth and lead to long-term connections.
- The County is partnering with two organizations offering Family Finding and Engagement services, which will expand our ability to locate relatives and explore connections, which may lead to placement opportunities.

Updates to Information Disseminated at the 3/14/26 Task Force Meeting - Documentation, Court Reports, and Quality of Notes

Documentation, Court Reports, and Quality of Notes

- Templates were developed to include service referral dates, monthly child visits, mental health service tracking, and interagency collaboration (completed November 2024).
- Supervisors were trained on the new template and a revised contact note policy on November 6, 2025.
- An 'investigation narrative setup' process (takes 45 mins in system) is now being pre-populated by case assistant support staff.

Updates to Information Disseminated at the 3/14/26 Task Force Meeting - Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) /Agreements

In Progress

- Language has been drafted to update the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to include timelines for the provision of services by mental health and Regional Center Providers. Language was agreed upon in February 2026. Anticipated to go to the BOS in March 2026.

Updates to Information Disseminated at the 3/14/26 Task Force Meeting - Hiring (Bachelor's and Master's Levels)

Bachelor's Level:

2024 - 22 hires

2025 - 10 hires

Master's Level:

2024 - 46

2025 - 24

***** Attrition for Bachelor's and Master's Level:**

2024 - 19

2025 - 20

Follow-up from the 3/14/26 Task Force Meeting - Agreed Upon Deliverables

1. Written Follow-Up on Case Age Breakdown

- DCFS will provide a written breakdown of open referrals by specific year of origination (2021, 2022, etc.)

2. CDSS Site Visit — March 26, 2026

- CDSS will conduct a site visit of DCFS on March 26, 2026

3. Next Task Force Meeting — Focused on 6-Month State Report

- The next task force meeting On March 27th, 2026, will be structured around DCFS's mandatory 6-month audit progress report to the State
- Task Force two-week meeting cycle will be reassessed after the March 26th CDSS site visit to align with oversight milestones
- Additional data points regarding Emergency Response to be provided.

Updates to the California State Auditor's Office

- The following recommendations have been deemed “Fully Implemented” by the California State Auditor’s Office:
 - Recommendation 6 - Making “shadowing” mandatory
 - Recommendation 7- Documentation of service provision
 - Recommendation 9 - Relative Notification Process
 - Recommendation 13 - Develop a process to track training hours for supervisors & child welfare workers
- The following recommendations are expected to be deemed “Fully Implemented” by the California State Auditor’s Office:
 - Recommendation 10 - Update System Improve Plan (SIP) to include sibling relationship. Documentation: Minute order with BOS approval of the update to SIP.

Updates to the California State Auditor's Office - *Continued*

- The auditors will be informed of the opening of the Transitional Shelter Care Facility (TrSCF). This impacts recommendations 11 & 12, which require the requested policies be implemented.
- There is a possibility that recommendation 14 - holding staff accountable for training hours may be deemed “Fully Implemented” by the auditor’s office after this update. Documentation: Child Welfare Supervisors are documenting training progress in conference memorandums. Additionally, completion of required training is a part of our evaluation for child welfare workers and child welfare supervisors.

Updates to the California State Auditor's Office - *Continued*

- The following recommendations will be submitted as “Not Fully Implemented” to the Auditor’s office
 - Recommendations 1-5. These recommendations involve the timeliness of investigations, the completion of investigations, closure of referrals, hiring additional staff, and supervisory oversight.
 - Recommendation 8 - Update of the 2083 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).
- In the Department's update we will provide our progress that we have made on those measures. The progress update will contain information that has been previously presented to the BOS.

Status of Implementation of Recommendations

State Auditor Assessment Status

● Fully Implemented: 4 of 15 (27%)

Recs: 6, 7, 9, 13

● Pending: 9 of 15 (60%)

Recs: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, 14, 15

● Pending*: 2 of 15 (13%)

Rec 11 & 12 — awaiting facility reopening

#	Recommendation	Status	Timeline
1	Recommendation 1: To ensure that it timely initiates and completes investigations of all immediate and non-immediate referrals, the department should, by January 2026, ensure that all supervisors review and approve investigation reports in a timely manner to ensure that they agree with the disposition.	Pending	Ongoing
2	Recommendation 2: To ensure that it timely initiates and completes investigations of all immediate and non-immediate referrals, the department should, by January 2026, periodically review the status of all referrals to determine the number of days to initiate and complete investigations and work with staff to identify impediments to initiating and completing investigations within the required time.	Pending	Ongoing
3	Recommendation 3: To ensure that it timely initiates and completes investigations of all immediate and non-immediate referrals, the department should, by January 2026, develop a strategy to address all identified impediments to ensure that it reduces the number of days for initiating and completing all investigations to comply with required time frames.	Pending	Ongoing
4	Recommendation 4: To ensure that it has sufficient staff to provide timely investigations of child abuse and neglect referrals and the timely provision of foster care services, the department should do the following by October 2026, survey all staff to identify impediments to retention and recruitment of staff and develop an action plan to address the identified impediments.	Pending	Aug. 2026/Ongoing

Status of Implementation of Recommendations - Continued

State Auditor Assessment Status

● Fully Implemented: 4 of 15 (27%)

Recs: 6, 7, 9, 13

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Rec 11 & 12 — awaiting facility reopening

#	Recommendation	Status	Timeline
5	Recommendation 5: To ensure that it has sufficient staff to provide timely investigations of child abuse and neglect referrals and the timely provision of foster care services, the department should do the following by October 2026, hire more staff in the CWW I classification, up to 50 percent of the total child welfare workers in the department's ER Unit, as CDSS allows.	Pending	Ongoing
6	Recommendation 6: To ensure that it has sufficient staff to provide timely investigations of child abuse and neglect referrals and the timely provision of foster care services, the department should do the following by October 2026, make its shadowing process mandatory for new employees to reduce the time supervisors spend training new staff.	Fully Implemented	Completed
7	Recommendation 7: To ensure that foster youth receive all necessary services within the prescribed or agreed-upon time frames, the department should create and implement policies and processes that include the following by October 2026: (1) Documenting the service referral dates for all services. (2) Documenting all service provision, including dates when a service was provided to foster youth through an interagency partner or a contractor. (3) Reviewing and documenting, at least monthly during their visits with youth, whether youth receive services according to agreed-upon time frames and frequencies. (4) Documenting all efforts to collaborate with interagency partners to ensure timely service delivery, including efforts to obtain documentation of needed services, time frames, and delivered services.	Fully Implemented	Completed Nov 2025/Ongoing

Status of Implementation of Recommendations - Continued

State Auditor Assessment Status

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Recs: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, 14, 15

● * 2 of 15 (13%)

Rec 11 & 12 — awaiting facility reopening

#	Recommendation	Status	Timeline
8	Recommendation 8: To ensure that it has the necessary documentation to identify all services that partner agencies provide to youth and to ensure the timeliness of those services, the department should propose a change to the MOU to provide for information sharing. This information should include the types of services that youth are scheduled to receive, the dates the youth were referred for services, and when the services were provided to ensure timely and coordinated delivery of services.	Pending	Ongoing
9	Recommendation 9: To ensure that the department's child welfare workers consistently and accurately identify, locate, and notify all possible relatives of a youth within 30 days of the youth's removal from a caretaker, the department should develop policies and procedures for such practices by October 2026.	Fully Implemented	Implemented Sep 2025/Ongoing
10	Recommendation 10: To ensure that foster youth fully benefit from their family network, the department should, by October 2026, include provisions for continued engagement with siblings and sibling relationship development and maintenance in its five-year System Improvement Plan for 2024 through 2029.	Pending	Approved Dec 2025
11	Recommendation 11: To ensure that it provides a safe space for foster children and youth in the new transitional shelter, the department should, by October 2026, develop policies and processes for tracking and minimizing overstays at its transitional shelter. The policies and processes should include a biannual review that analyzes trends and outcomes of strategies the department uses to minimize overstays, including a determination of the effectiveness and appropriateness of each strategy.	Pending*	*pending facility reopening Cannot implement until the new TrSCF opens

Status of Implementation of Recommendations - Continued

State Auditor Assessment Status

 Fully Implemented: 4 of 15 (27%)

Recs: 6, 7, 9, 13

 Pending: 9 of 15 (60%)

Recs: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, 14, 15

 * 2 of 15 (13%)

Rec 11 & 12 — awaiting facility reopening

#	Recommendation	Status	Timeline
12	Recommendation 12: To ensure that it identifies and corrects any past deficiencies before it reopens the new transitional shelter, the department should, by October 2026, collaborate with its transitional shelter contractors and implement policies and processes for the quarterly evaluation of transitional center performance, such as reviewing compliance with its operating standards, facility standards, and standards of reporting critical incidents. The policies and processes should include the documentation of corrective actions. The department should also implement procedures for tracking trends in critical incidents at the new facility to ensure that it can address any deficiencies it identifies.	Pending*	*pending facility reopening for reporting Cannot implement until the new TrSCF opens
13	Recommendation 13: To ensure that department staff receive the required core and continuing training in a timely manner, the department should do the following by October 2026, develop and document a process to track child welfare workers' and supervisors' progress in completing all required continuing training and report regularly to department management the training completion records for all staff. This process should include creating periodic reminders for child welfare workers and supervisors to complete annual continuing training.	Fully Implemented	Completed Oct–Nov 2025/Ongoing

Status of Implementation of Recommendations - Continued

State Auditor Assessment Status

 Fully Implemented: 4 of 15 (27%)

Recs: 6, 7, 9, 13

 Pending: 9 of 15 (60%)

Recs: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, 14, 15

 * 2 of 15 (13%)

Rec 11 & 12 — awaiting facility reopening

#	Recommendation	Status	Timeline
14	Recommendation 14: To ensure that department staff receive the required core and continuing training in a timely manner, the department should do the following by October 2026, establish processes to hold child welfare workers and supervisors accountable for completing the core training and annual continuing training. For example, the process could incorporate completion of training requirements in staff performance appraisals.	Pending	Ongoing
15	Recommendation 15: To ensure that it can monitor the timely provision of services, the department should, by October 2026, make sure that all contracts include the RBA measures, such as timeliness performance metrics for service provision.	Pending	Mar 2026/Ongoing

Questions?

Michelle Love, Assistant Agency Director,
Department of Children & Family Services



Thank you.