



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES DIVISION OF CHILD PROTECTION AND PERMANENCY GRANTS-IN-AID July 1, 2015 to March 6, 2019

We found that the department's child abuse hotline calls were adequately documented and coded in a timely manner to ensure appropriate units were notified and that abandoned calls fell within acceptable limits, and that licensing and monitoring procedures were adequate to ensure child care centers were licensed and in compliance with pertinent licensing regulations. However, in making these determinations, we noted certain weaknesses meriting management's attention regarding the licensing and inspection process, the accounting and financial reporting of the adoption assistance program, and the contract closeout and overpayment recovery process.

We also made observations regarding individuals noted on the Department of Human Services Central Registry of Offenders Against Individuals with Developmental Disabilities, the potential need for specific skills required of employees to expedite the licensing process, the current Youth Residential Licensing computer information systems, and the results of an inspector survey to identify areas where improvements are needed in the licensing of child care centers.

AUDIT HIGHLIGHTS

- Federal criminal history background checks are not performed upon the license renewal of centers. This poses a risk of a staff member having been arrested or convicted of an out-of-state or federal crime subsequent to their initial background check which would disqualify them from having contact with children at the centers. Federal regulations associated with a block grant now require all current staff members at these centers have a criminal history background check at least once every five years. Failure to comply with these regulations could result in a five percent penalty to the state (approximately \$7.1 million) in annual federal funding.
- Data matches between the Department of Human Services' criminal record database and state wage reporting data yielded 1,844 potential instances where an individual had earnings associated with a DCF licensee and was identified in the database as having a state or federal criminal record without any notation of them obtaining clearance to work with children.
- We accompanied inspectors on 25 unannounced inspections of child care centers. The average number of violations for these centers was 20 with the number of violations ranging from 3 to 47. Of 305 repeat violations, 62 involved nine centers with an average of 261 days from the date each violation was cited to the date each violation was abated or still open as of our inspection. This occurred even though from five to nine inspections were performed at each of these nine centers during this same time period. A requirement for child care centers to submit corrective action plans for significant or repeat violations could help create a safe and healthy environment.

AUDITEE RESPONSE

The department generally concurs with our findings and recommendations.

For the complete audit report or to print this Executive Summary, click [here](#).