

# ESA Transition Report

Updates on the transfer of case management to DHHS

February 28, 2022

**T**ransition of Eastern Service Area (ESA) case management continues on schedule, with all case staffings completed by the end of February 2022. Through January and February, caseworkers from the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Saint Francis Ministries (SFM) and numerous stakeholders staffed cases for more than 1,600 youth in the ESA. DHHS thanks system partners for participation and support in helping ensure the children and families in the ESA receive the services they need, when they need them.

Since the transition began, DHHS has welcomed more than 80 new teammates who transferred from SFM. Caseworker and casework supervisor transfers will continue through March; administrative and support staff will transfer in March and April. DHHS plans to transfer more than 190 teammates from SFM by the middle of May 2022.

The success of the ESA transition would not be possible without the care and commitment of hundreds of social workers. March is Social Work Month, and the National Association of Social Workers has proclaimed the 2022 theme “The Time Is Right for Social Work.” DHHS honors those who have chosen to make social work their life’s work. On behalf of children and families across Nebraska, thank you!



THE TIME IS RIGHT  
FOR SOCIAL WORK

Table 1: ESA Teammate Transfers—SFM to DHHS	2022					
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
Cumulative # of caseworker transfers	12	60				
Cumulative # of casework supervisor transfers	3	12				

*Approximately 200 SFM employees will become DHHS teammates over the first several weeks of 2022. This table shows transferring caseworkers and casework supervisors only. Other incoming teammates include legal, IT, training and administrative specialists.*

Table 2: ESA Case Transfers—SFM to DHHS	2022					
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
Cumulative # of youth to be transferred to DHHS	1,655	1,677	<b>100% of youth cases have been staffed and/or set to close</b>			
Cumulative # of youth cases staffed, pending transfer to DHHS	178	1,569				
Cumulative # of youth cases closed/set to close before transfer	64	108				
Cumulative # of youth officially transferred to DHHS	134	1,136				

*Case staffings were scheduled through the end of February 2022. Staffings assessed a child’s placement, visitation, current services, permanency plan, upcoming hearings, barriers and other key factors.*

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**Nebraska Department of Health & Human Services  
Division of Children & Family Services**

## CFS Administrators: the Backbone of Nebraska's Child Welfare Practice

Leading with experience  
and compassion

As ESA case management practices return to DHHS, each day brings a different set of tasks and challenges for a Child and Family Services Administrator.

DHHS Administrators have the responsibility of ensuring team members have the tools, training, and support necessary to do their jobs. This includes actively and effectively partnering with families, vulnerable Nebraskans and others to promote safety, permanency and well-being, as well as providing quality services that meet the needs of those served.

Administrators are seasoned child welfare professionals—many with over 20 years of experience—who field numerous calls and e-mails and participate in meetings with case managers, supervisors and families on a daily basis.

Administrators also lead cross-functional teams that create and improve processes that ensure quality and efficient practices. Additionally, they are key to the work of reimaging systems of collaboration among stakeholders.

As teammates continue to transition from SFM to DHHS, Administrators will continue to ensure caseworkers receive high-quality training and support so families and children receive the care and services they need to be well.

Table 3: ESA Cases	2022					
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
# of out-of-home cases (per child)	1,527	1,537				
# of in-home cases (per family)	193	196				
# of Initial Assessment/Alt Response cases	545	722				
<i>Case counts as of the last Friday of the month.</i>						
Table 4: Statewide Cases	2022					
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
# of out-of-home cases (per child)	3,265	3,295				
# of in-home cases (per family)	728	731				
# of Initial Assessment/Alt Response cases	1,374	1,670				
<i>Case counts as of the last Friday of the month.</i>						
Table 5: ESA Case Distribution	2022					
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
# of caseworkers in training (no caseload yet)	15	15				
# of caseworkers with <15 cases	89	71				
# of caseworkers with 15-17 cases	23	19				
# of caseworkers with 18-25 cases	41	47				
# of caseworkers with 25+ cases	14	23				
<i>Case counts as of the last Friday of the month. Caseload distribution is an indication of caseload burden. Monitoring distribution helps CFS managers make case assignment decisions on a daily and weekly basis. (DHHS also reports compliance with statutory caseload ratio requirements here: <a href="https://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/CFS-Data-and-Reports.aspx">https://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/CFS-Data-and-Reports.aspx</a>)</i>						

### New ESA Leadership Team Announced

Prior to the transition of cases to DHHS, the Department was responsible for investigating reports of abuse or neglect in the ESA through the Internal Assessment (IA) team. Management of in-home and out-of-home cases was handled by SFM. DHHS calls this work Ongoing case management. The transition of cases required establishing a new, larger ESA leadership team under the direction of Service Area Administrator Lana Verbrigghe. Congrats to those who accepted internal promotions into these roles (\*) and who joined DHHS from an outside organization (\*\*).

**IA Team—Douglas Co.:** Amanda Nawrocki\*, Administrator 2; Alicia Packard\*\*, Administrator 1 and Melanie Jones\*, Administrator 1

**Ongoing Team—Douglas Co.:** Kinsey Baker\*, Administrator 2; Kari Pitt, Administrator 1; Megan Miller\*\*, Administrator 1

**IA/Ongoing Team—Sarpy Co.:** Suzanne Sabus\*, Administrator 1

**Support Services Team (ESA):** Nikki Novak\*\*, Administrator 1

**Adult Protective Services, Bridge to Independence, Out of Home Assessment (ESA):** Shayne Schiermeister, Administrator 1