

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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Janet T. Mills
Governor

Jeanne M. Lambrew, Ph.D.
Commissioner



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September 4, 2020

Chairs Sen. Cathy Breen and Rep. Drew Gattine
Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs
Chairs Sen. Geoff Gratwick and Rep. Patty Hymanson
Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services
#100 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0100

Dear Senator Breen, Representative Gattine, Senator Gratwick, Representative Hymanson, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services:

Please find the enclosed report on caseload and placement data from the Office of Child and Family Services (OCFS), pursuant to 22 MRSA §4003(5).

This report is required to be delivered monthly to the Health and Human Services and Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committees. There is no record of this report being produced or transmitted to the legislature that OCFS can find since this became law in 1999. Due to this, this first report includes data from the beginning of the Mills Administration. Going forward, this report will include monthly data.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Office of Child and Family Services.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jeanne M. Lambrew".

Jeanne M. Lambrew, Ph.D.
Commissioner

JML/klv

Enclosure



Caseload and Placement Report

August 2020

Required by:
22 M.R.S.A. §4003(5)

Maine Department of Health and Human Services
Office of Child and Family Services

Dear Senator Gratwick, Representative Hymanson, Senator Breen, Representative Gattine, and esteemed members of the Health and Human Services and Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committees,

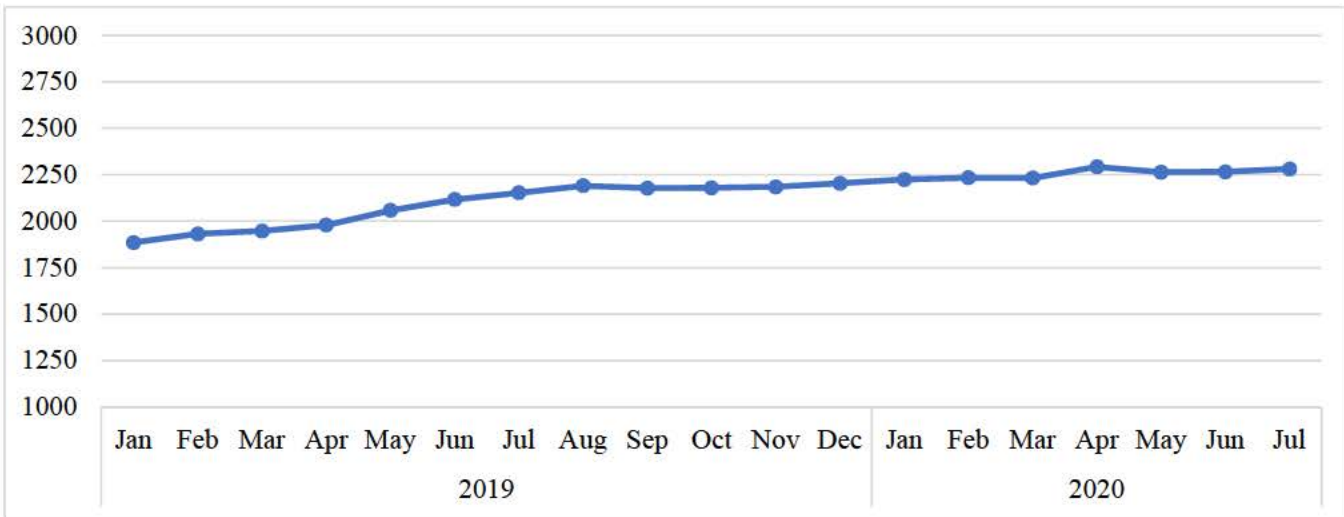
This report is being provided to you pursuant to 22 M.R.S.A. §4003(5) by the Office of Child and Family Services (OCFS) within the Department of Health and Human Services. Over the last few years as OCFS has undertaken system improvement efforts we have also sought to ensure transparency. Part of this commitment included a review of all statutory requirements governing OCFS' work. During that review we came to learn that OCFS is statutorily required to provide the Health and Human Services and Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committees with a monthly report pursuant to 22 M.R.S.A. §4003(5). The report is required to contain information on the child protective services caseload, the number of reports of abuse and/or neglect that were not assigned for investigation (also known as assessment), and the location of the children in the Department's custody.

The statutory provision requiring this report was adopted in 1999 by the 119th Legislature in LD 2510, also known as *An Act to Make Supplemental Appropriations and Allocations for the Expenditures of State Government and to Change Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2000 and June 30, 2001*. Unfortunately, we could find no record of the previous administration providing this report. In an effort to continue our commitment to transparency we are providing the attached report which covers each month from January 2018 to the last full month for which data is available, July of 2020. We will continue to provide both Committees with this report on a monthly basis but would also point out that much of this data is already contained in monthly data OCFS reports publicly as part of the Department's goal of ensuring transparency in our work. In addition, we provide some of this data (specifically data on the placement of children, along with other data related to children in out-of-home care) to the Government Oversight Committee through the Office of Program Evaluation and Government Accountability. Please let us know if you would prefer not to receive this report on a monthly basis at this time.

OFFICE OF CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES MONTHLY LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Monthly Snapshot of Children in OCFS Care, Point In Time - First of the Month

The following chart provides point in time insight into how many children were in the care of the Office of Child and Family Services (OCFS) on the first day of each month. It is important to keep in mind that the number of children in care is a function not just of the number of children entering custody, but also of the number exiting custody. If, in a given month, 20 children enter care and 20 children exit care, that results in zero increase or decrease to the number of children in OCFS' care. While the number of children in OCFS' care has risen since January of 2018, OCFS remains committed to exiting each child that enters OCFS' custody to safe and stable permanency as expeditiously as possible.



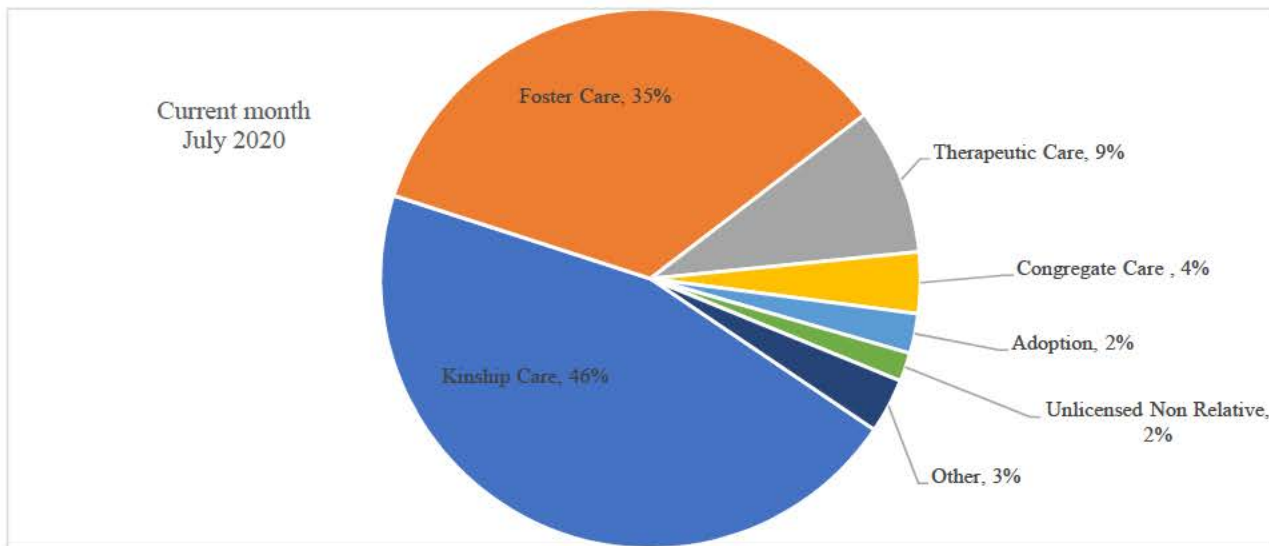
Years	Month	Count
2019	Jan	1885
2019	Feb	1932
2019	Mar	1947
2019	Apr	1979
2019	May	2058
2019	Jun	2117
2019	Jul	2153
2019	Aug	2191
2019	Sep	2178
2019	Oct	2180
2019	Nov	2185
2019	Dec	2204
2020	Jan	2224
2020	Feb	2234
2020	Mar	2232
2020	Apr	2293
2020	May	2264
2020	Jun	2266
2020	Jul	2281

Snapshot of Children in OCFS Care by Placement

While in foster care, the Department's goal is to place children in the least restrictive placement necessary. The following chart shows the number of children by placement type as of the current month as well as a chart showing this data for each month since January of 2019.

OCFS places a strong emphasis on retaining familial connections for children in OCFS' custody whenever safely possible. This is reflected in the data below, which shows nearly 50% of children in OCFS' custody are placed with kin. OCFS is also particularly proud of the small number of children on OCFS custody who are placed in congregate care. A 2017 report by the National Conference of State Legislatures indicated that approximately 14% of children in state custody across the country were placed in congregate care facilities.

In seeking the least restrictive placement necessary for each individual child, Maine has been able to ensure that children are only placed in a congregate care setting when it is necessary in order for them to receive residential treatment for mental or behavioral health issues.

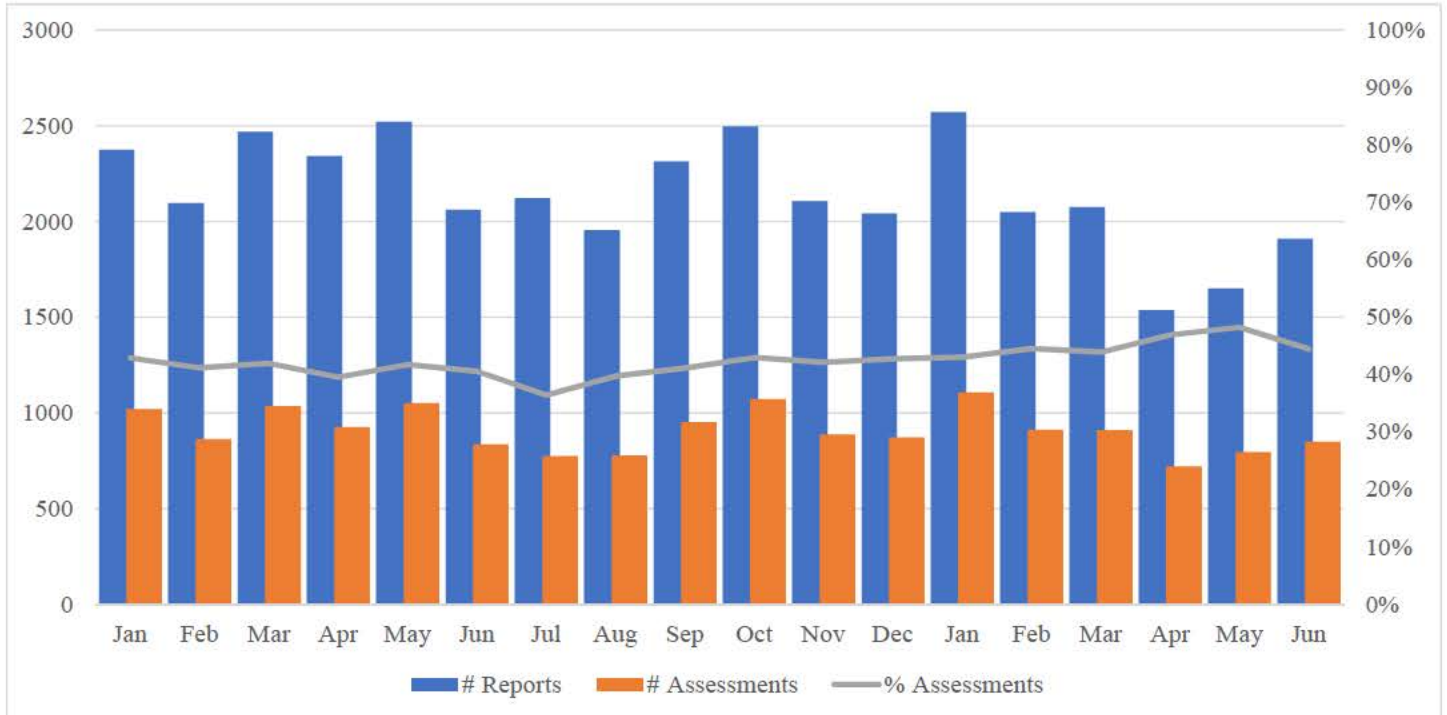


Monthly view

Years	Month	Kinship Care	Foster Care	Therapeutic Care	Congregate Care	Adoption	Unlicensed Non Relative	Other
2019	Jan	42%	31%	13%	5%	3%	3%	4%
2019	Feb	49%	17%	8%	3%	15%	1%	7%
2019	Mar	49%	18%	8%	3%	14%	1%	7%
2019	Apr	43%	32%	11%	5%	3%	3%	4%
2019	May	50%	20%	8%	3%	12%	1%	6%
2019	Jun	50%	21%	8%	3%	11%	1%	6%
2019	Jul	45%	32%	10%	5%	3%	2%	3%
2019	Aug	51%	22%	8%	3%	9%	1%	5%
2019	Sep	50%	24%	8%	3%	8%	1%	5%
2019	Oct	46%	34%	9%	4%	2%	2%	3%
2019	Nov	49%	26%	8%	4%	8%	1%	5%
2019	Dec	48%	27%	8%	4%	7%	1%	5%
2020	Jan	45%	34%	9%	4%	2%	2%	3%
2020	Feb	47%	30%	9%	4%	5%	1%	4%
2020	Mar	47%	31%	9%	4%	5%	1%	4%
2020	Apr	45%	34%	9%	4%	3%	2%	3%
2020	May	46%	34%	9%	4%	2%	2%	3%
2020	Jun	46%	34%	9%	4%	2%	2%	3%
2020	Jul	46%	35%	9%	4%	2%	2%	3%

Number of Reports Received/Number and Percent of Reports Assigned for Investigation by Month

The following data represents a summary of the number of reports to OCFS' Intake Unit and number (as well as percentage) of those reports deemed appropriate for investigation (also known as assessment) by OCFS field staff. An interesting trend OCFS has been monitoring is a slight increase in the average percentage of reports deemed appropriate since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. OCFS is continuing to monitor this trend on a weekly basis in its publicly available COVID-19 Trend Reporting.



Year	Month	# Reports	# Assessments	% Assessments
2019	Jan	2376	1019	43%
2019	Feb	2097	863	41%
2019	Mar	2469	1036	42%
2019	Apr	2342	926	40%
2019	May	2521	1052	42%
2019	Jun	2062	836	41%
2019	Jul	2123	773	36%
2019	Aug	1956	777	40%
2019	Sep	2314	951	41%
2019	Oct	2496	1072	43%
2019	Nov	2107	888	42%
2019	Dec	2043	873	43%
2020	Jan	2571	1106	43%
2020	Feb	2050	913	45%
2020	Mar	2075	911	44%
2020	Apr	1537	721	47%
2020	May	1650	796	48%
2020	Jun	1910	849	44%