



House Select Committee on Child Protection

Interim Charge Presentation

Judge John Specia, DFPS Commissioner

July 24, 2014

- Contract Oversight
- Regulatory
- Foster and Kinship Screening, Training and Support
- System for Youth to Report Maltreatment

Part One

Contract Oversight

Purchased Client Services

- In FY 2013, DFPS had 2,369 contracts which accounts for approximately 35% of DFPS expenses or \$482,375,038. Examples of services include:
 - 24-hour child-care facilities and child-placing agencies
 - Family crisis counseling
 - Respite care
 - Parent-education
 - Home visiting
 - Child day care services
 - Preparation for Adult Living
 - Adoption and Post-adoption services
 - Drug testing
 - Substance abuse treatment
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- In FY 2013, approximately 73% of the contracted expenditures (\$351,544,594) were with residential child care operations. Private providers care for 90% of the children in foster care.
- To ensure effective oversight of the contracting process, DFPS has a Contract Oversight and Support Division (COS), which reports to the Chief Operating Officer. COS is responsible for:
 - Agency-wide policies and procedures related to contract management
 - Training and support regarding contracting responsibilities
 - Annual quality assurance reviews

Purchased Client Services

- DFPS staff determines which providers to monitor based on the level of risk.
 - DFPS staff conducts a risk assessment to determine which providers are the highest risk and monitors them to ensure that they are compliant with the terms of the contract.
 - If a provider is not in compliance with the contract, DFPS will establish a corrective action plan to outline steps a provider must take to come into compliance.
 - If the corrective action plan is not followed, DFPS may take other actions that are necessary to ensure compliance, including suspending or terminating a contract as a whole or in part.
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- Internal Audit conducted a contract monitoring audit to assess the process for evaluating residential child care provider performance, with a focus on child safety and quality of care.
- The audit recommended the development of a risk assessment instrument based on predicative analytics, an evidence-based statistical technique that analyzes data to forecast the likelihood of future events or behaviors.
- Predictive analytics would enable DFPS to better identify and monitor providers and foster homes that present the greatest risk to child safety and intervene more quickly.

Comparison of Contract Monitoring Approaches	
Traditional	Predictive Analytics
➤ Reactive	➤ Proactive
➤ Periodic performance measurement	➤ Continuous quality improvement
➤ Compliance focused	➤ Outcome focused
➤ Judgmental risk ratings	➤ Data-driven risk ratings
➤ Annual risk assessment	➤ Continuous risk assessment
➤ Human resource intensive	➤ Leverages technology

- Since an automated risk assessment tool based on predictive analytics will require resources and time to develop and implement, for FY 2015, DFPS is employing an interim approach to predictive analytics that includes eight new risk factors:
 - Age of children in care
 - Child fatalities in placement based on abuse and neglect
 - Investigation disposition in residential facilities
 - Licensing minimum standard deficiencies
 - Emergency behavior intervention deficiencies, such as restraints of children
 - Background check deficiencies
 - Licensing corrective or adverse action
 - The data for the new risk factors will come from existing data sources: IMPACT and CLASS.
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Part Two Regulatory

The Child Care Licensing program is responsible for protecting the health, safety, and well-being of children in daycare operations and residential operations through consistent and fair enforcement of licensing laws and regulations. Child Care Licensing includes:

- Residential Child Care Licensing (RCCL)
- Daycare Licensing

Child Care Licensing regulates approximately 30,000 facilities and homes with a capacity of over 1.1 million children.

RCCL conducts these activities to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of children in care.

- Development and monitoring of statewide rules and minimum standards
- Processing applications and issuing permits to operations
- Inspecting operations for compliance
- Overseeing the Licensed Administrator's program
- Providing technical assistance to residential child-care operations, to help them improve and meet or exceed minimum standards.

RCCL regulates the following types of child-care operations:

- General Residential Operations - child care facilities that provide care for more than 12 children for 24 hours a day, including children's homes, residential treatment centers, emergency shelters, and therapeutic camps.
 - Child Placing Agencies - person, agency, or organization other than the natural parents or guardian of the child, which places or plans for the placement of a child in a child-care facility, agency foster home, agency foster group home, or adoptive home.
 - Foster Family Homes - provide 24-hour care for 6 or fewer children younger than age 18.
 - Foster Group Homes - provide 24-hour care for 7-12 children younger than age 18.
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- DFPS Child Safety Project: RCCL proposed changes to minimum standards regarding the screening, verification, and supervision of foster homes with the goal of improving safety of children in foster care.
 - If adopted, the minimum standards would become effective on September 1st
- RCCL is proposing additional changes to minimum standards related to: children with primary medical needs; normalcy for children; and integrating trauma informed care into minimum standards.

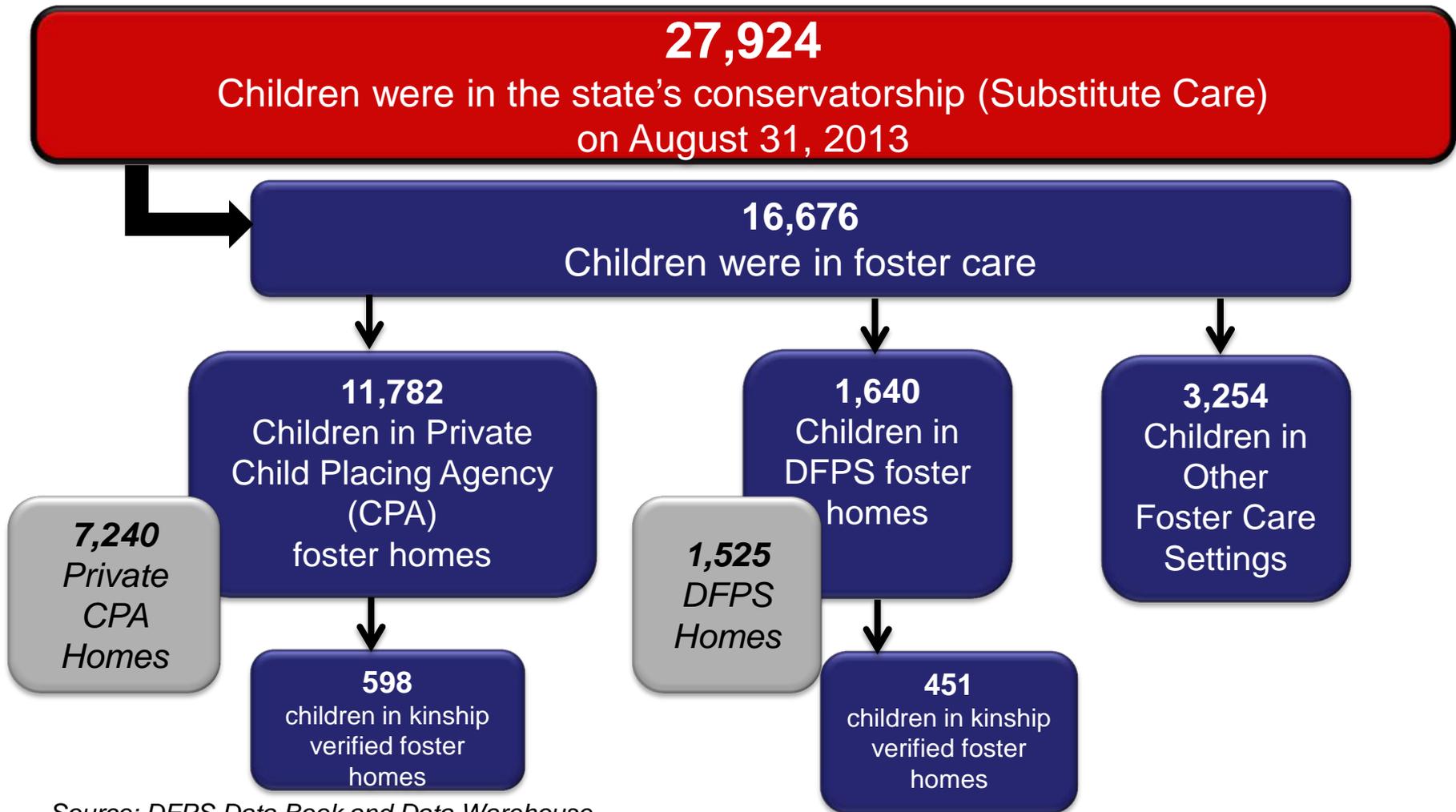
The following are some examples of current and upcoming initiatives in Child Care Licensing:

- Human Trafficking Initiative
- Minimum Standards Review
- Basic Skills Development – Training redesign
- Business Planning Process

Part Three

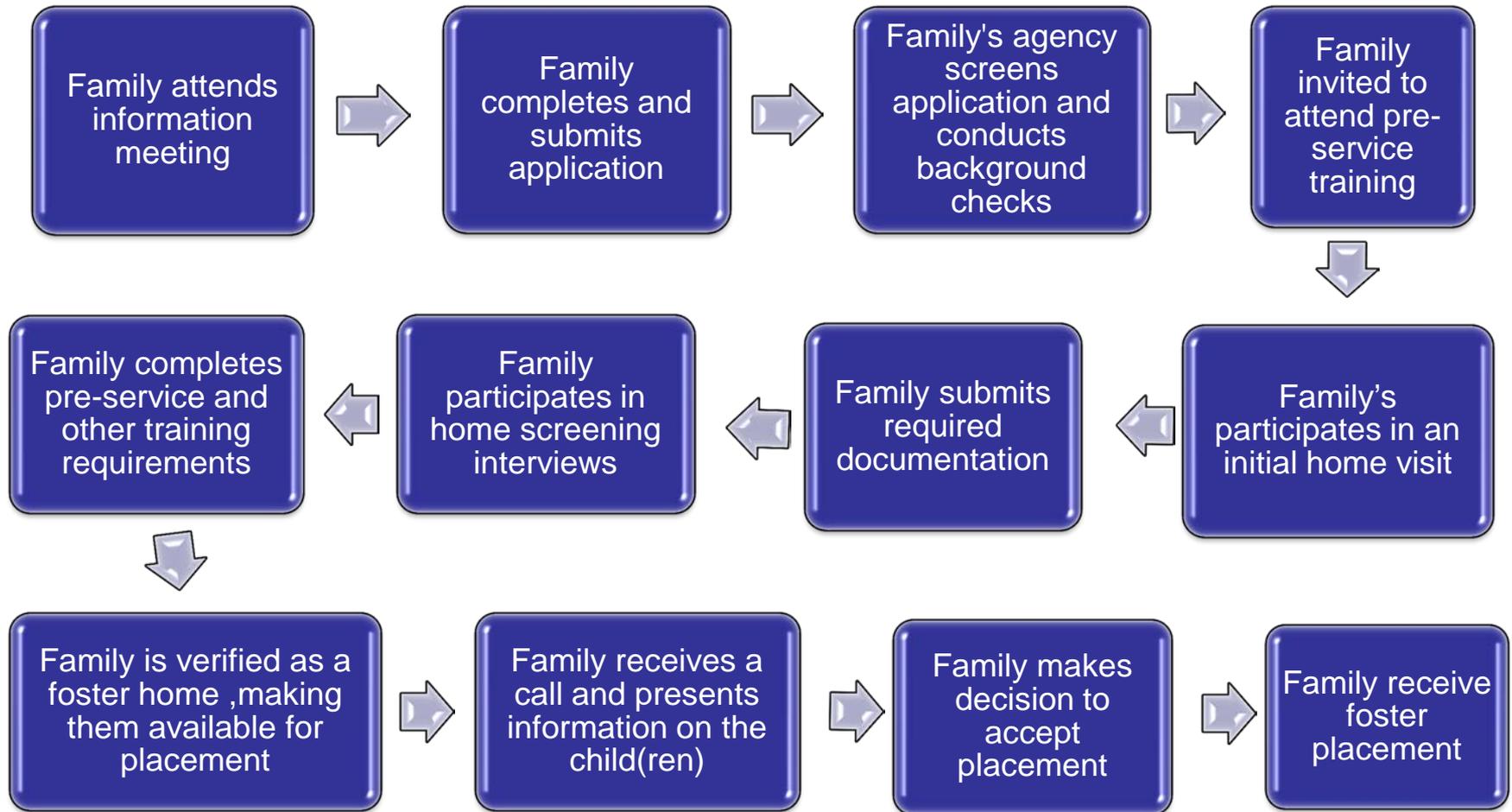
Foster and Kinship Screening, Training and Support

Foster Care Population



Source: DFPS Data Book and Data Warehouse

Verification Process for Foster Families



A home screening is a written screening /assessment of the family. All family members are interviewed to evaluate areas of the foster parent's life as they relate to becoming a foster and/or adoptive parents.

These areas include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Ability to meet the foster children's needs
 - Motivation
 - Health status
 - Quality of marital and family relationships
 - Feelings about childhood and parents, including abuse/neglect history
 - Expectations of the foster and/or adoptive parenting experience
 - Financial status to ensure the household has adequate resources
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Parent Resource for Information, Development and Education (PRIDE) is a national curriculum for pre-service training for foster and adoptive families.

- Texas PRIDE - 35-hour
- Mini-PRIDE abbreviated for kinship families – 16 to 20 hrs. depending on the needs of the family

The training purposes:

- educate potential parents about foster care and adoption
- and to mutually assess the applicant's appropriateness to care for children in DFPS custody.

Beyond pre-service training, foster families complete a minimum of 20 training hours annually.

DFPS foster and adoptive families are assigned a caseworker to help support and guide the family. Some of the services provided to these families include:

- Home visits
- Respite services
- Day care services
- Ongoing training specific to the behaviors of children placed in the home
- Support and mentorship
- 24 hour assistance through on call services
- Membership to Texas Foster Families Association (TFFA) or referrals to other support groups
- Foster parent appreciation events

- For generations, relatives or “kinship caregivers” have played significant roles in caring for children when parents are having a difficult time.
- Relatives and other people with whom the child or family have a significant relationship can often provide children with safety and stability when they cannot live with their parents.

What Are the Benefits of Kinship Care?

- Provides love and care in a familiar setting
 - Provides parents with assurance that children will remain connected to their birth families
 - Enables children to live with people they know and trust
 - Reinforces a child's cultural identity and positive self-esteem
 - Helps a child make and sustain extended family connections
 - Continues lifelong family traditions and memories
 - Supports the child building healthy relationships within the family
 - Supports the child's need for safety and well-being
 - Creates a sense of stability in the life of a child
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Permanency Care Assistance

- In September 2010, Texas began a financial assistance program to help kinship foster parents who sign an agreement with DFPS and subsequently take permanent legal custody of the child.
- Kinship caregivers must become verified as foster parents, care for the child as foster parents for at least six months, negotiate a PCA (financial) agreement, and then go to court and receive legal custody.
- The Legislature also approved extending PCA benefits up to a youth's 21st birthday if the PCA agreement was signed after a CPS youth turns 16.

Part Four

System for Youth to Report Maltreatment

Youth Reporting Maltreatment

- When children enter the CPS system, they are provided with the Foster Youth Bill of Rights, which includes contact information for the Texas Abuse/Neglect Hotline and Office of Consumer Affairs.
- They are also encouraged to inform their caseworker, caregiver, or another adult they feel comfortable with if they do not feel safe.
- They are also provided with information on where to turn if they have questions or need help.

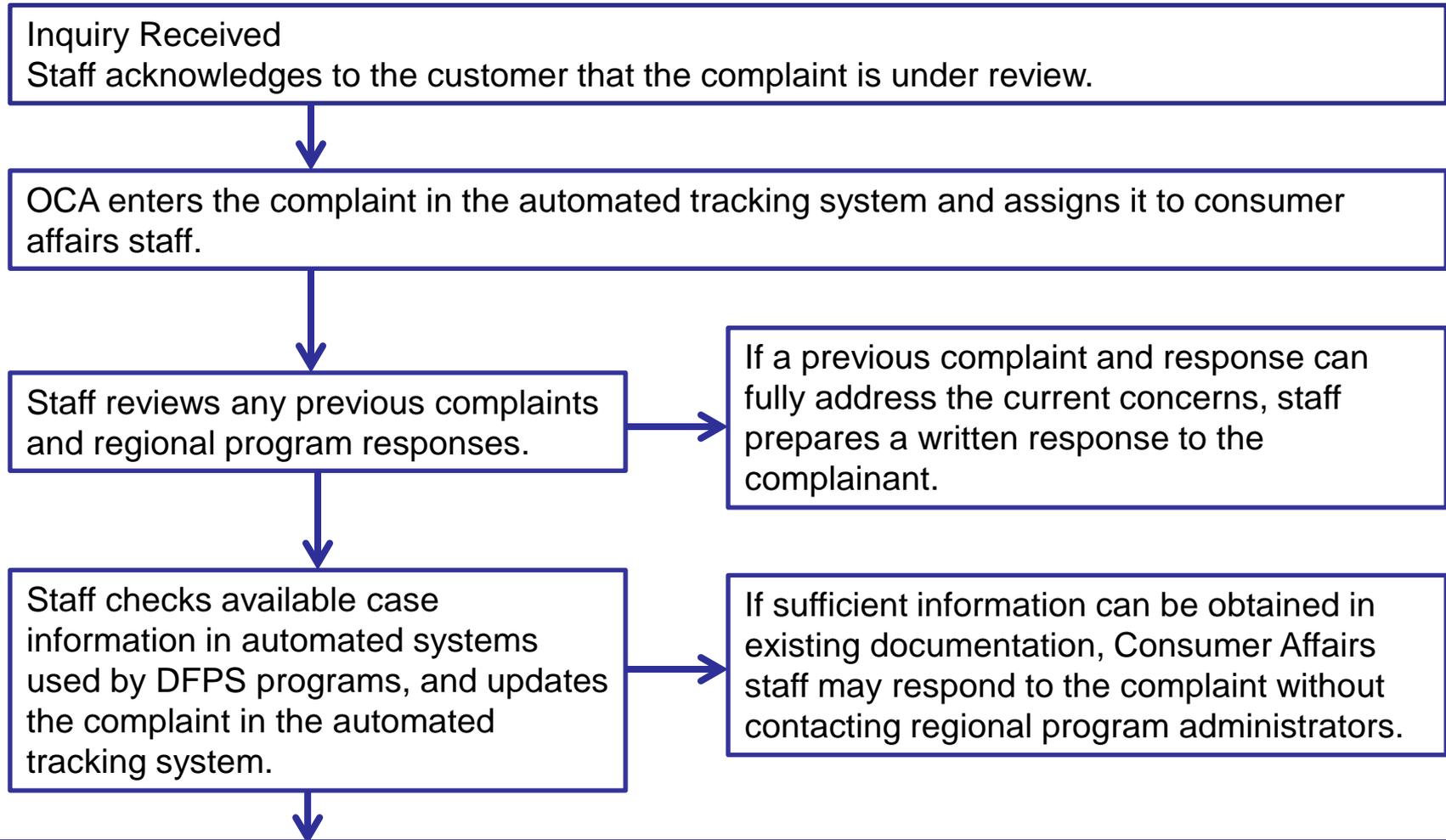
- Youth in care may report maltreatment to the following individuals:
 - CPS Caseworker
 - Caregiver (foster parent, kinship caregiver)
 - DFPS Statewide Intake
 - DFPS Office of Consumer Affairs
 - Attorney
 - CPA Caseworker
 - Counselor
 - CASA volunteer
 - Attorney ad litem
 - PAL Specialist (if over age of 15)
 - Kinship Development Worker
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The DFPS Office of Consumer Affairs (OCA) receives, responds to, and catalogues inquiries and complaints from entities external to DFPS.

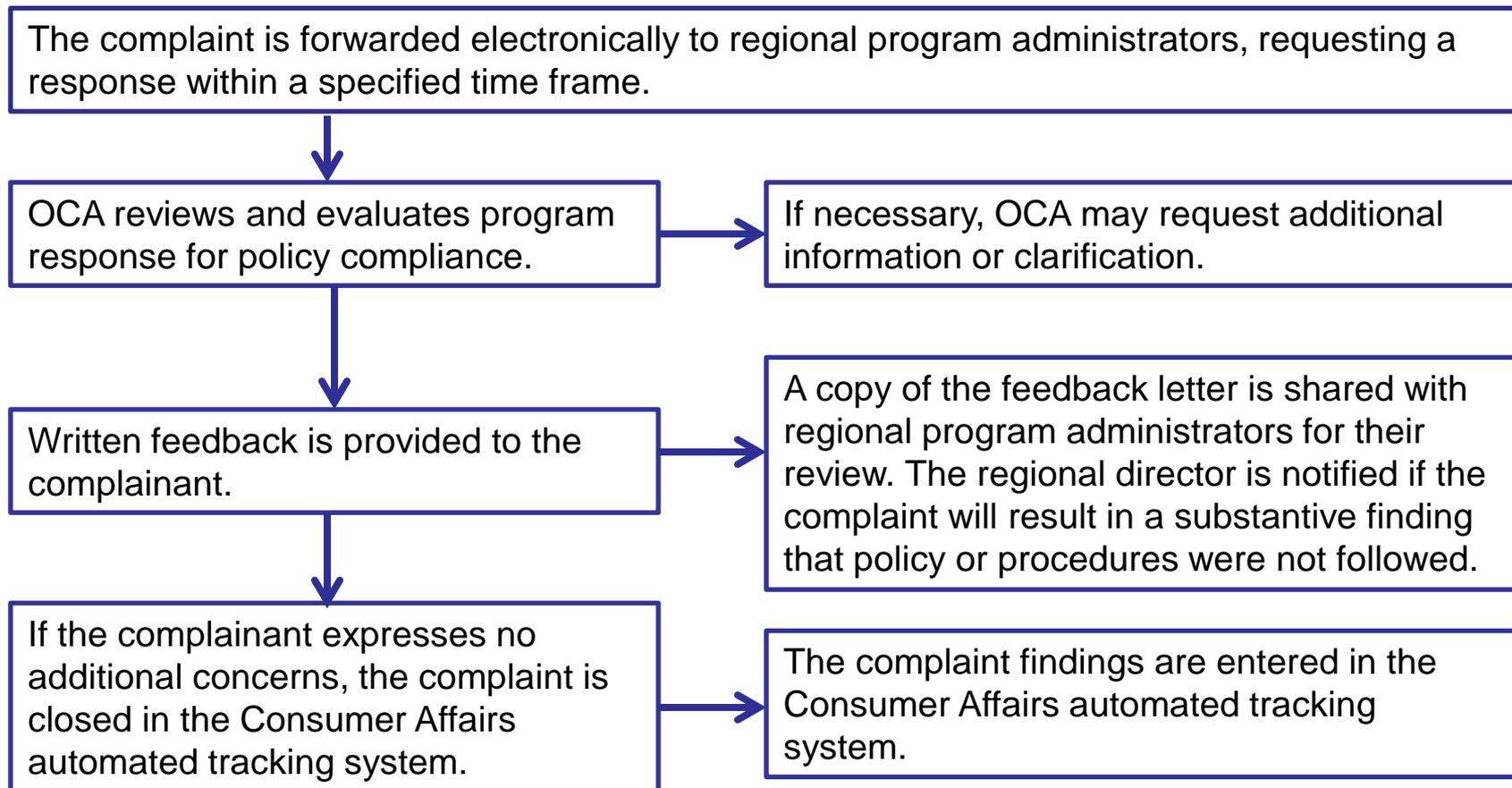
The OCA is responsible for:

- case-specific complaints related to all agency programs
- appeals of case findings for CPS following the Administrative Review of Investigation Findings process that continues to identify an individual in the role of Designated Perpetrator.

Complaint Review Process



Complaint Review Process



Children and youth may call:

- Child Abuse/Neglect Hotline: 1-800-252-5400
- Texas Youth & Runaway Hotline: 1-800-989-6884
- Office of Consumer Affairs: 1-800-720-7777