



## TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES

COMMISSIONER  
Anne Heiligenstein

October 1, 2010

The Honorable Rick Perry  
Governor of Texas  
P.O. Box 12428  
Austin, Texas 78711

The Honorable Steve Ogden  
Chairman Senate Finance Committee  
Texas Senate  
P.O. Box 12068  
Capitol Station  
Austin, Texas 78711-2068

The Honorable Jim Pitts  
Chairman, House Committee on Appropriations  
Texas House of Representatives  
P.O. Box 2910  
Austin, Texas 78768-2910

Mr. John O'Brien, Director  
Texas Legislative Budget Board  
P.O. Box 12666  
Austin, Texas 78711-2666

Pursuant to Rider 13, Senate Bill 1, 81st Regular Legislative Session, Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) is directed to develop a Human Resources Management Plan designed to improve employee morale and retention. The plan must focus on reducing employee turnover through better management. The FY 2010 Human Resources Management Plan will build on the success of previous years' retention efforts. Per the requirements of Rider 13, we respectfully submit the following items:

- progress made on the FY 2010 Human Resources Management Plan;
- a discussion of the turnover statistics for FY 2010;
- an analysis of workforce retention challenges; and
- an outline of the initiatives for the new FY 2011 Human Resources Management Plan.

Retaining staff is critical for DFPS to achieve its mission of protecting children, the elderly and people with disabilities from abuse, neglect and exploitation by involving clients, families and communities. While turnover increased in FY 2010, it is still at a predictable level. The current turnover rate of 17.4 percent is significantly lower than it was in FY 2007 when it reached over 21.2 percent. Over the past few years, DFPS has made remarkable strides in reducing turnover, so this year's moderate increase from 15.2 percent to 17.4 percent appears to be a small upward turn on an overall decreasing trend.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this information.

Sincerely,

Anne Heiligenstein  
Commissioner

Enclosures

cc: Mary Katherine Stout, Office of the Governor  
Katherine Yoder, Office of the Governor  
Sarah Hicks, Senate Committee on Finance  
Brittani Bilse, Senate Committee on Finance  
Amy Peterson, House Committee on Appropriations  
Julie Haeber, House Committee on Appropriations  
Nancy Millard, Legislative Budget Board

# **Rider 13 - Human Resources Management Plan**

A Report from

**The Texas Department of Family and  
Protective Services**

**October 1, 2010**

## Introduction

Senate Bill 1, Rider 13, 81<sup>st</sup> Regular Legislative Session directs the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) to develop a Human Resources Management Plan designed to improve employee morale and retention. The plan must focus on reducing employee turnover through better management. The effectiveness of the agency’s plan shall be measured by whether there is a reduction in annual employee turnover rates at the agency, specifically by the reduction in the turnover rates for caseworkers.

To review the new FY 2011 Human Resources Management Plan within the context of the past year, this document includes the following:

- Progress made on the FY 2010 Human Resources Management Plan
- Discussion of the turnover statistics for FY 2010
- Analysis of workforce retention challenges
- An outline of the FY 2011 Human Resources Management Plan
- Appendix: Turnover and HR-Related Data for Fiscal Years 2009 and 2010

## FY 2009 Human Resources Management Plan

The Workforce Support and Retention Initiative (WSRI) included people from across the agency and across the state who worked on the projects undertaken in FY 2008 and FY 2009. More than 100 people were involved in the WSRI. DFPS employees saw a commitment from agency leadership to reduce turnover and make the work environment better for employees. While individual employees may not have been able to pinpoint specific projects contributing to their willingness to stay, they were aware of progress being made.

Because of the success of the WSRI in FY 2009, similar work was continued in FY 2010. A group of projects were outlined in October 2009 for the FY 2010 Human Resources Management Plan. The following table shows the status of those projects:

### FY 2010 Human Resources Management Plan Projects

Project	Status
<p><b>2010 Survey of Employee Engagement</b> -- Much of the data supporting projects undertaken in the Human Resources Management Plan comes from the Survey of Employee Engagement (SEE). This survey was last administered to DFPS employees in February and March 2008. The next iteration of the survey will be done in early 2010. The survey data will be analyzed for agency-wide issues. Regional data will be shared with CPS and APS regional directors. District data will be shared with CCL district directors.</p>	<p><b>Complete</b> -- Since the 2010 Human Resources Management Plan was written, the name of the Survey of Organizational Excellence changed to the Survey of Employee Engagement (SEE). All DFPS employees were given the opportunity to participate in the 2010 SEE. The survey was open between February 22 and March 12. Sixty-six percent of employees completed the survey. The University of Texas has compiled the reports DFPS requested. The reports have been distributed to the appropriate managers for action.</p>

Project	Status
<p><b>FY 2009 DFPS Exit Survey Results</b> -- DFPS began surveying individuals terminating employment with the agency in January 2009. This survey is more extensive than the survey administered by the State Auditor's Office and is customized to the agency's needs. The survey data from FY2009 will be analyzed for agency-wide issues. Regional data will be shared with CPS and APS regional directors. District data will be shared with CCL district directors.</p>	<p><b>Complete</b> -- The 2009 DFPS Exit Survey Annual report was distributed to management in November 2009. Subsequent annual reports will be produced on a regular schedule. Completed DFPS and SAO surveys are reviewed monthly. Comments alleging a work rule violation are forwarded to the appropriate Executive Team member for further investigation. Comments that allege illegal activity are forwarded to DFPS Legal Services. All comments made on both the DFPS and SAO exit surveys are forwarded to the appropriate Executive Team member each quarter.</p>
<p><b>Statewide Intake Retention Initiative</b> -- While all DFPS programs have shown improvement, turnover at the agency's abuse and neglect call center, Statewide Intake, remains significantly higher than turnover in other programs. Leadership in Statewide Intake has initiated a retention project patterned after the Workforce Support and Retention Initiative. Focus groups were held with workers and supervisors to glean ideas on ways to improve the program for staff. Managers are chairing work groups comprised of supervisors and workers to address the issues raised.</p>	<p><b>Complete</b> -- The six work groups that make up this initiative are Strengthening Supervision, Managing Workloads, Promoting Employee Communications and Input, Improving Hiring Practices, Valuing Employees and Enhancing the Work Environment. Work groups within the Statewide Intake Retention Initiative have selected projects to undertake and have begun work on them. Turnover in Statewide Intake has decreased from 20.7% in fiscal year 2009 to an annualized rate of 18.6% in fiscal year 2010. Statewide Intake is planning more projects for fiscal year 2011.</p>
<p><b>Tarrant County Retention Initiative</b> -- Under the guidance of the CPS and APS regional directors and the CCL district director, staff in Tarrant County are undertaking a retention initiative called "Stay Another Day." The initiative was started after a similar initiative in Bexar County had success. Focus groups were held with workers and supervisors to find ways to improve the work environment within the county. Work groups are determining projects to undertake.</p>	<p><b>Complete</b> -- The six work groups that make up this initiative are Strengthening Supervision, Managing Workloads, Promoting Employee Communications and Input, Improving Hiring Practices, Valuing Employees and Enhancing the Work Environment. Work groups have completed their projects. The Initiative had moderate success in CPS and CCL where both programs showed decreases in turnover during fiscal year 2010. APS experienced an increase in turnover.</p>
<p><b>Study Workers with High Caseloads</b> -- Despite the reduction in caseloads over the past few years, stress related to workload continues to be a significant factor contributing to turnover. Workers who maintain high caseloads will be studied to determine if there are short-term steps that can be done to improve process and workload. Surveys were sent to selected workers and their supervisors in late FY 2009. Those responses will be analyzed and reported to agency and program leadership.</p>	<p><b>Complete</b> -- Surveys were sent to the 20 caseworkers with the highest caseloads and their managers. Of those, 19 sets of workers and supervisors responded. Because of the limited number of respondents, data cannot be extrapolated to the population of CPS caseworkers. Overall, those polled indicated that their workload was not consistently manageable, and they did not feel confident in their ability to manage their high caseload. The survey resulted in two basic areas where staff indicated the best way to reduce workload: add additional caseworkers and streamline procedures. The survey results have been shared with CPS leadership.</p>

Project	Status
<p><b>CPS Realistic Job Preview</b> -- DFPS will produce a realistic job preview video for CPS caseworker positions. Job applicants will watch the video before an interview. Applicants can remove themselves from the hiring process if they decide they no longer want to pursue employment as a caseworker. It is far better for DFPS to deal with low applicant pools than invest in new caseworkers who will not be successful. The video will show actual interviews with CPS caseworkers giving the positive and negative aspects of the job.</p>	<p><b>Complete</b> -- The video has been produced and incorporated into the hiring process for direct delivery jobs in CPS. After the initial screening process, the top few applicants for a position are asked to complete assessment tests. During this process, applicants watch the video and are asked questions afterward to verify that they paid attention. Additionally, hyperlinks to the video are placed in job postings.</p>
<p><b>Standardize Testing for Bilingual Pay</b> -- Bilingual pay can be used as a recruiting tool for field offices that find it difficult to attract qualified bilingual caseworkers. Regions that offer bilingual pay have different methods for testing an applicant's proficiency in the second language. In FY 2009, DFPS began work to standardize the way applicants are tested; however, this process was delayed. The HHSC Civil Rights Office (CR) reviewed the DFPS procedures around bilingual pay. CR found these procedures non-discriminatory but suggested that they be formally documented. DFPS is currently documenting those procedures. Once that is done, DFPS can begin developing the standardized test.</p>	<p><b>Complete</b> -- During fiscal year 2010, DFPS went through the procurement process for pre-employment assessment testing. A new vendor began testing applicants in September 2010. The vendor created a bilingual skills test and accompanying scoring guide that DFPS will use.</p>
<p><b>Rookie Year On-Boarding</b> -- The Workforce Support and Retention Initiative Valuing Employees work group spent a great deal of time studying how to integrate new employees into the agency's culture. They discovered that many employers tend to view this process as taking somewhere between a day and a week. In their research, the work group found that this process takes much longer and begins before the employee arrives for the first day of work. The work group developed the rookie year on-boarding concept to help supervisors welcome and support their new employees through the first year. The materials are being finalized and will be rolled out to supervisors.</p>	<p><b>In progress</b> -- Final edits to the materials are in progress. An intranet page to house all the materials is under development. A communication plan is under development. This plan will include when and how all managers will be notified about the roll-out of the materials and how managers will be reminded of the materials each time they hire a new employee. Implementation has been pushed to fiscal year 2011 and will be part of that year's Human Resources Management Plan.</p>

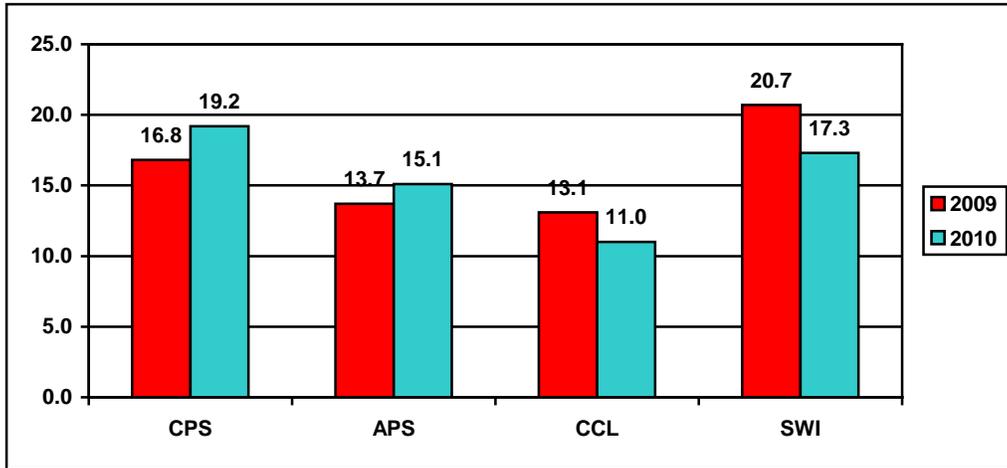
## FY 2010 Turnover Results

Overall, turnover measures at DFPS for FY 2010 show slight increases above FY 2009. The agency's turnover rate decreased from 19.4 percent in FY 2008 to 15.2 percent in FY 2009. Certainly the national economic downturn helped employee retention at DFPS during that year; however, the economy appears to be picking up again, so it isn't surprising to see some increase to 17.4 percent in FY 2010. The following chart shows the FY 2010 turnover for Child Protective Services (CPS), Adult Protective Services (APS), Child Care Licensing (CCL) and Statewide Intake (SWI).

### Percentage Turnover by Program, FY 2010

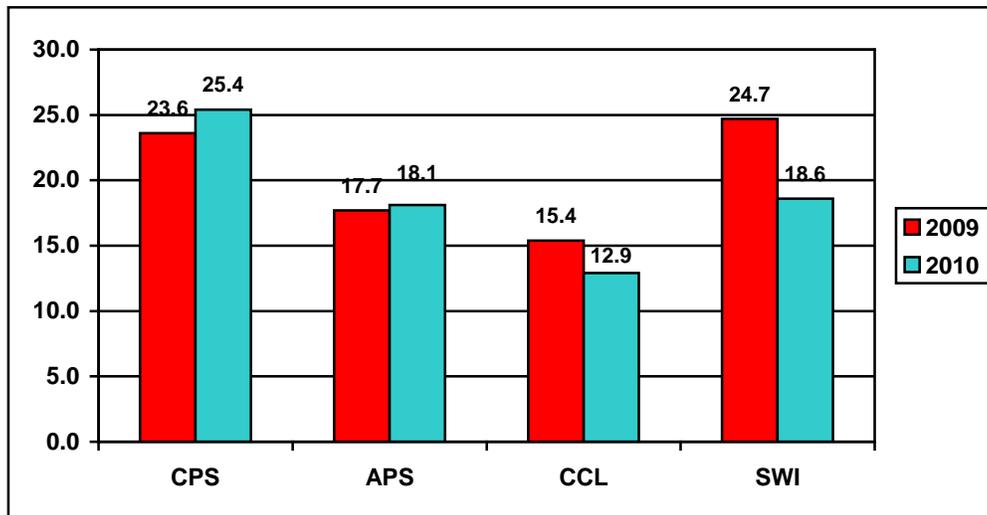
From FY 2009 to FY 2010, the turnover rates for CPS and APS increased slightly while CCL and SWI posted improvements. The turnover rates in FY 2009 and FY 2010 for CPS, APS, CCL and SWI are shown in the following chart.

**Percentage Turnover for All Programs, FY 2009-2010**



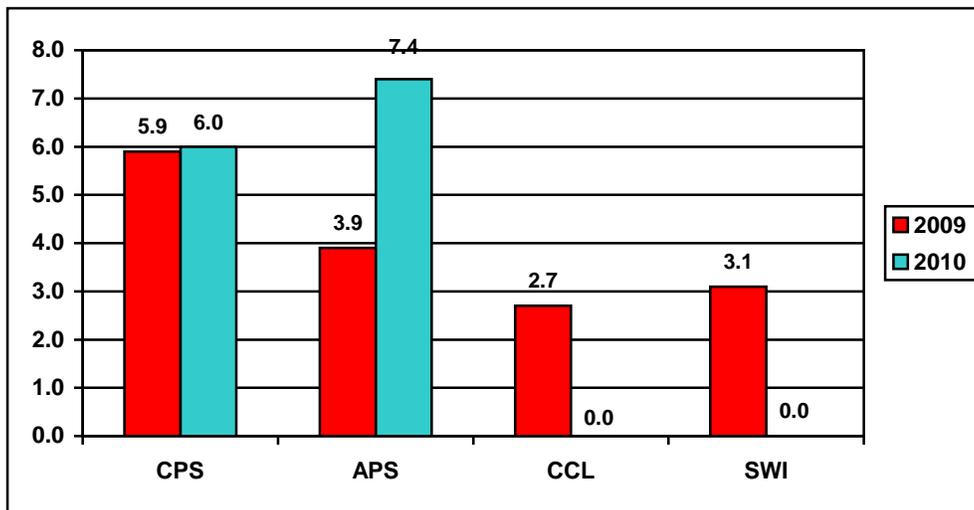
The turnover rates for DFPS workers (direct delivery staff) in FY 2010 increased for CPS and APS and decreased for CCL and SWI. The turnover rates for workers in FY 2009 and FY 2010 for CPS, APS, CCL and SWI workers are shown in the following chart.

**Percentage Turnover for Workers, FY 2009-2010**



Supervisors are critical to retention, so knowing how the agency is doing in retaining supervisors is important to the efforts of retaining caseworkers. CPS experienced a very slight increase in supervisor turnover during FY 2010. APS saw a significant increase in supervisor turnover; however, the percentage is still well below APS worker turnover. CCL and SWI saw no turnover among supervisors; however, there were likely some staff changes where a supervisor took a different job within DFPS or within the Health and Human Services (HHS) Enterprise. The turnover rates in FY 2009 and FY 2010 for CPS, APS, CCL and SWI supervisors are shown in the following chart.

**Percentage Turnover for Program Supervisors, FY 2009-2010**



Overall, the turnover remained at a predictable level in FY 2010. DFPS certainly does not want to experience increases in turnover; however, the increases were typically modest and certainly well below turnover rates in recent history. DFPS will continue to work on employee retention issues seeking new ways to make the work environment better for employees so that they can provide the best services possible to clients.

## DFPS Analysis of Workforce Retention Challenges

DFPS uses multiple sources of information about why employees leave the agency and why employees stay. Several key sources are described below:

### ***Survey of Employee Engagement (SEE)***

The data gathered through the SEE assists DFPS to understand, from the viewpoint of the employee, what the organization is doing well, where improvement efforts should be targeted, and how employees perceive various aspects of the workplace. The SEE is conducted in state agencies every two years by the Institute for Organizational Excellence at the University of Texas and was last administered in February and March 2010. According to the 2010 SEE results, DFPS employees rated the agency highest in the following constructs: supervision, strategic, information systems, employee development and team. According to the SEE researchers, the high response rate in 2010 – 66 percent – indicates “that employees have a reasonable investment in the organization, want to see the organization improve and generally have a sense of responsibility to the organization.” The next iteration of the SEE will be in early calendar year 2012.

### ***The State Auditor’s Office (SAO) Survey of Exiting Employees***

In 2001, legislation was passed requiring the SAO to develop an online employee exit survey as a direct source for employees to provide feedback about their reasons for leaving state employment. HHS agencies have had some challenges in getting these surveys completed by departing staff, and the data is of somewhat limited use as currently collected and presented by the SAO. DFPS reviews and analyzes all responses received. There were 348 surveys completed in FY 2010. For both the SAO and DFPS surveys, responses are reviewed on a monthly basis. Comments are forwarded to the appropriate executive team member. An annual report aggregating the quantitative data is developed for the executive team.

### ***DFPS Exit Survey***

The DFPS Exit Survey was launched in January 2009. Its goal is to gather the opinions of exiting employees about the positive and negative aspects of working at DFPS, what caused them to leave and what DFPS can do to keep employees. There were 254 surveys completed in FY 2010.

### ***Regional All Staff Meetings***

Over the past few years, the Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, and Executive Team of DFPS have participated in the regional all staff meetings in every region of the state. During these meetings, staff are given the opportunity to provide candid feedback about morale and conditions in the agency.

### ***Independent Studies***

A variety of external studies are done on employee retention in the human services field in general and several on DFPS in particular. In the past year, these have included theses and dissertations by Master's and PhD-level researchers, focused on CPS worker retention.

Out of these various sources of information, a core group of underlying causes for turnover were identified:

#### ***Compensation***

According to the 2010 SEE results, 71 percent of DFPS employees do not believe that they are paid fairly for the work they do. Sixty-four percent felt that their salaries weren't competitive with similar jobs in their communities. Seventy-seven percent said that their pay does not keep pace with the cost of living. Over the past few iterations of the SEE, the pay construct has significantly lagged behind all other constructs measured by the survey. While DFPS can recognize pay as a factor contributing to turnover, there are significant barriers to increasing pay at DFPS including state salary restrictions, HHS policy and an impending budget shortfall predicted for the State of Texas.

#### ***Support for New Caseworkers***

When caseworkers leave DFPS, they typically do so within the first two years of employment. In FY 2010, the turnover rate for entry level CPS workers was 35.6 percent. The turnover rate for entry level APS workers was 31.7 percent. Caseworkers start their jobs in a 12-week training program, and by the end of the first two years, they are functioning with a full caseload. During these two years, learning is constant, and expectations are continually increased. To provide quality service to clients, it is critical that DFPS systematically select caseworkers and equip them to succeed. DFPS has a career ladder program for caseworkers and their supervisors, and the timeframes for movement between steps vary across programs. DFPS will bring a legislative appropriation request exceptional item into the 82<sup>nd</sup> Regular Session that seeks funding to bring programs into alignment and to bring the first promotion opportunity closer to when DFPS loses front line staff.

#### ***Workload Concerns***

Many DFPS employees feel overworked. Thirty-seven percent of respondents to the 2010 SEE survey said that the amount of work they are asked to do is unreasonable. Thirty-four percent felt that their work environment did not support a balance between work and personal life. DFPS has made strides in recent years in hardware and software technology to make employee's work easier. On the 2010 SEE, 77 percent of employees said that information systems are in place and accessible for them to get their jobs done. It is critical to retention that DFPS reduce workload where possible and support employees where reduction is not possible.

## ***Supervision***

Over the past few iterations of the SEE, the construct score for supervision has risen from one of the more poorly performing areas to the highest scoring construct. The turnover rate for CPS supervisors was 6.0 percent in FY 2010. In the same period, the rate was 7.4 percent for APS. With supervisors leaving the agency, caseworkers with management potential must be promoted. Given that the typical caseworker is a new college graduate, a new DFPS supervisor will likely be in his or her first formal management role. Therefore, preparing and training new managers is incredibly important. When parting employees respond negatively on either the DFPS or SAO exit survey, often the comments cite problems with particular managers.

## **FY 2011 Human Resources Management Plan**

The FY 2011 Human Resources Management Plan is comprised of projects that seek to address the underlying causes for turnover mentioned earlier.

### ***2010 Survey of Employee Engagement Action Tracking***

Much of the data supporting projects undertaken in the Human Resources Management Plan comes from the SEE. This survey was last administered to DFPS employees in February and March 2010. Data has been shared with the appropriate managers. These managers will be assigned to take action on their results. The actions will be tracked centrally and will be shared with staff.

### ***FY 2010 DFPS Exit Survey Results***

DFPS began surveying individuals terminating employment with the agency in January 2009. This survey is more extensive than the survey administered by the State Auditor's Office and is customized to the agency's needs. The survey data from FY 2010 will be analyzed for agency-wide issues. Regional data will be shared with CPS and APS regional directors. Licensing district data will be shared with CCL district directors.

### ***Recruitment of Bilingual Staff***

DFPS serves many clients who do not speak English as their primary language. To better serve these clients and to reduce spending on translation services, DFPS needs a number of caseworkers who can communicate with clients in languages other than English, particularly in Spanish and Vietnamese. DFPS will explore ways to attract bilingual applicants for direct delivery jobs.

### ***Recruitment in Rural Areas***

DFPS has field offices throughout the state, some located in urban areas and some located in rural areas. Many times hiring specialists experience low applicant pools for jobs that are located in rural areas. DFPS will investigate ways to attract applicants to direct delivery jobs in rural areas.

### ***Rookie Year On-Boarding Implementation***

The WSRI Valuing Employees work group spent a great deal of time studying how to integrate new employees into the agency's culture. They discovered that many employers tend to view this process as taking somewhere between a day and a week. In their research, the work group found that this process takes much longer and begins before the employee arrives for the first day of work. The work group developed the rookie year on-boarding concept to help supervisors welcome and support their new employees through the first year. Implementation of the concept has been delayed to focus on other projects. With staff in place to support the concept,

implementation should be smoother than it would have been in fiscal year 2010. Roll-out is planned for fiscal year 2011.

### ***Statewide Intake Retention***

Statewide Intake undertook a retention initiative during fiscal years 2009 and 2010. During that time, Statewide Intake went from being the program with the highest turnover to falling more in line with the other DFPS programs. In fiscal year 2011, Statewide Intake will undertake several new projects aimed at reducing turnover even further.

### ***Marketing the Career Ladder Program***

Certification is a process where direct delivery staff and their supervisors earn pay increases by achieving specific amounts of tenure, completing approved training programs and maintaining satisfactory performance. When the Protective Services Training Institute (PSTI) processed certification applications, they viewed certification as something that must be maintained. Since taking over processing certification applications, DFPS has changed this philosophy. DFPS views achieving a level of certification as a distinct event. Therefore, certification is really a career ladder program. To highlight the change in philosophy, the DFPS Certification logo includes the slogan, "Climb the Ladder." This slogan communicates to employees that through certification, employees can advance their careers. DFPS will further develop "Climb the Ladder" and market certification to existing staff and job applicants.

The projects of the 2010 Human Resources Management Plan impact employees at various stages in their careers with DFPS. The two recruitment projects seek to increase the number of people in applicant pools that tend to be some of the smallest among direct delivery jobs, so DFPS is already thinking about new employees before the individuals to fill the positions are identified. With larger applicant pools, DFPS has the opportunity to offer employment to better candidates. The rookie year on-boarding project impacts new staff before they begin their careers and through the first year of employment. The career ladder marketing project shifts employees' mindsets about how they progress through their careers. Employees will seek the career ladder program as an opportunity rather than hoops they have to jump through.

## **Conclusion**

Retaining staff is critical for DFPS to achieve its mission of protecting children, the elderly and people with disabilities from abuse, neglect and exploitation by involving clients, families and communities. While turnover increased in FY 2010, turnover is still at a predictable level. The current turnover rate of 17.4 percent is significantly lower than it was in FY 2007 when it reached over 21.2 percent. Over the past few years, DFPS has made remarkable strides in reducing turnover, so this year's moderate increase from 15.2 percent to 17.4 percent appears to be a small upward turn on an overall decreasing trend.

The projects in the 2011 Human Resources Management Plan should have a positive impact on turnover. With a handful of far-reaching, targeted projects, employees will continue to see improvement in the work environment.

# APPENDIX: RIDER 13 EMPLOYEE ANNUALIZED TURNOVER REPORT

## Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS)

Functional Title	FY 2009 Turnover Rate <sup>1</sup>	FY 2010 Turnover Rate <sup>1</sup>
All Employees	15.2%	17.4%

### Child Protective Services (CPS)

Functional Title	FY 2009 Turnover Rate <sup>1</sup>	FY 2010 Annualized Turnover Rate <sup>1</sup>
CPS Workers	23.6%	25.4%
CPS Supervisors	5.9%	6.0%
CPS Program <sup>3</sup>	16.8%	19.2%
CPS Specialist II <sup>2</sup>	31.3%	35.6%
CPS Specialist III	12.6%	19.3%
CPS Specialist IV	10.9%	10.4%
CPS Specialist V	5.5%	4.9%
CPS Special Investigator	18.2%	12.0%
CPS CVS Caseworker	20.1%	22.5%
CPS FBSS Caseworker	25.3%	28.9%
CPS INV Caseworker	30.1%	32.3%

### Adult Protective Services (APS)

Functional Title	FY 2009 Turnover Rate <sup>1</sup>	FY 2010 Annualized Turnover Rate <sup>1</sup>
APS Workers	17.7%	18.1%
APS Supervisors	3.9%	7.4%
APS Program <sup>3</sup>	13.7%	15.1%

### Child Care Licensing (CCL)

Functional Title	FY 2009 Turnover Rate <sup>1</sup>	FY 2010 Annualized Turnover Rate <sup>1</sup>
CCL Workers <sup>4</sup>	15.4%	12.9%
CCL Supervisors	2.7%	0.0%
CCL Program <sup>3</sup>	13.1%	11.0%

### Residential Child Care Licensing (RCCL)

Functional Title	FY 2009 Turnover Rate <sup>1</sup>	FY 2010 Annualized Turnover Rate <sup>1</sup>
RCCL Workers <sup>4</sup>	9.1%	13.9%
RCCL Supervisors	13.3%	4.4%
RCCL Program <sup>3</sup>	8.2%	13.9%

### Statewide Intake (SWI)

Functional Title	FY 2009 Turnover Rate <sup>1</sup>	FY 2010 Annualized Turnover Rate <sup>1</sup>
SWI Workers	24.7%	18.6%
SWI Supervisors	3.1%	0.0%
SWI Program <sup>3</sup>	20.7%	17.3%

<sup>1</sup>NOTE: DFPS calculates turnover using the SAO method: (the total number of regular employees who terminated during the period DIVIDED BY the average number of regular active employees during the period) TIMES 100 to produce a percentage. The terminated count includes all terminations, including interagency transfers, and employees are counted as terminated even if they subsequently return to DFPS during the period. Employees who terminate multiple times during the period are counted once for each termination event. The average number of regular active employees is calculated by counting every employee who worked for DFPS at any time during the quarter for each quarter during the period, and dividing the total by the number of quarter(s) in the period.

<sup>2</sup>Entry level for CPS workers is CPS Specialist II. The state classification for this level is Protective Services Specialist II.

<sup>3</sup>Because program group totals include all employees in that program, this number will exceed the total number of workers and supervisors in the program.

<sup>4</sup>CCL and RCCL Workers include employees serving in worker job codes and in the Inspector job codes.