



TEXAS
Department of Family
and Protective Services

Quarterly Report on Community-Based Care Implementation Status

Office of Community Based-Care Transition

September 2021

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Introduction

As required by Texas Family Code, Subchapter B-1, Chapter 264, section 264.172 (f), 87th Texas Legislature, the Office of Community-Based Care Transition (OCBCT) “shall report to the legislature at least once each calendar quarter regarding the implementation of community-based care in the state.” Status reports shall be provided on September 30th, December 31st, March 31st and June 30th of each year to the Texas Legislature.

Background

Community-Based Care (CBC) changes the way DFPS procures, contracts, and pays for foster care services. Under a performance-based grant agreement, a single contractor provides services to children and families within a designated community (also known as “catchment area”). In Stage I, this Single Source Continuum Contractor (SSCC) is responsible for ensuring the full continuum of paid foster care placements and other services for children in the state’s legal conservatorship. SSCCs also support adoption recruitment, matching and home studies. In Stage II, the SSCC expands services to include unverified relative or “kinship” placements, services to parents, and the SSCC has sole responsibility for the legal case management function. In Stage III, the SSCC continues the provision of all Stage I and II services and is awarded with financial incentives and disincentives for permanency outcomes and additional performance measures for child safety and well-being. For information and data on the performance of SSCC contractors, see the DFPS Rider 15 report.

New Office of Community-Based Care (CBC) Transition and Statewide CBC Director

The 87th Texas Legislature, as part of Texas Family Code, Subchapter B-1, Chapter 264, section 264.172, formally established the Office of Community-Based Care (CBC) Transition. The Office of CBC Transition is a state agency independent of, but administratively attached to, the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS). On June 29, 2021, Governor Greg Abbott appointed Theresa “Trisha” Thomas as the Statewide Director of the Office of CBC Transition. Ms. Thomas reports directly to the Governor.

DFPS, along with the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), will work together with the Office of CBC Transition on the implementation of Community-Based Care. Currently, Ms. Thomas is working with DFPS to define the structure of and needed resources for the new Office of Community-Based Transition.

Implementation Updates on CBC Communities

Update for Region 3B

The 3B catchment area is comprised of Tarrant, Erath, Hood, Johnson, Palo Pinto, Parker, and Somervell counties in DFPS Region 3W. DFPS executed an SSCC contract with ACH Child and Family Services (ACH) on January 1, 2014. ACH formed Our Community Our Kids (OCOK) to serve as the SSCC. After a six-month start-up period, DFPS certified readiness and OCOK began accepting placement referrals on September 1, 2014.

On September 1, 2018, DFPS renewed its contract with OCOK to continue services under Stage I (foster care and services for children) and added requirements for Stage II Community-Based Care and transition of kinship and legal case management services. DFPS and OCOK formally announced start-up for Stage II in October 2019 and enacted a formal implementation plan to accomplish transition activities related to communications, human resources (staff and case transitions), technology, purchased client services, policy, training and performance / quality assurance. DFPS formally certified readiness on February 27, 2020.

On March 1, 2020, OCOK assumed responsibility for all substitute care services to children and families in the 3B catchment area. As of September 1, 2021, 2,007 children and their families were receiving services through the OCOK continuum of care in Stage II.ⁱ Moving into fiscal year 2022, DFPS and the Office of Community-Based Care Transition will assess OCOK's movement into Stage III CBC.

Update for Region 2

The Region 2 catchment is comprised of 30 counties in northwest Texas around Abilene and Wichita Falls. DFPS executed an SSCC contract with Texas Family Initiative in May 2018. Texas Family Initiative formed a partnership with New Horizons Ranch and Center Inc. and created 2INGage to serve as the SSCC. After a six-month start-up period, DFPS certified readiness and 2INGage began accepting placement referrals on December 1, 2018.

DFPS and 2INGage formally announced start-up for Stage II in December 2019 and developed a formal implementation plan to accomplish transition activities related to communications, human resources (staff and case transitions), technology, purchased client services, policy, training and performance / quality assurance. DFPS formally certified readiness on May 27, 2020.

On June 1, 2020, 2INGage assumed responsibility for all substitute care services to children and families in the Region 2 catchment area. As of September 1, 2021, 1,649 children and their families were receiving services through the 2INGage continuum of care in Stage II. Moving

into fiscal year 2022, DFPS and the Office of Community-Based Care Transition will assess 2INgage's movement into Stage III CBC.

Update for Region 1

The Region 1 catchment area is comprised of 41 counties in the Texas Panhandle around Lubbock and Amarillo. DFPS awarded a contract to St. Francis Ministries and July 1, 2019. St. Francis Ministries formed St. Francis Community Services (St. Francis) to serve as the SSCC. After a six-month start-up period, DFPS certified readiness and St. Francis began accepting placement referrals for children on January 6, 2020.

The Office of CBC Transition and St. Francis formally announced start-up for Stage II on September 1, 2021 and began implementing a six-month transition plan. This plan will accomplish transition activities related to communications, human resources (staff and case transitions), technology, purchased client services, policy, training and performance / quality assurance. Implementation of Stage II in Region 1 is anticipated in March 2022 following confirmation of readiness. As of September 1, 2021, approximately 1,007 children and youth were receiving services through the St. Francis continuum of care.

Update for Region 8B

The Region 8B catchment area is comprised of all counties in DFPS Region 8 excluding Bexar County. DFPS released a new RFA for 8B on September 1, 2020, which closed on December 1, 2020. DFPS awarded a contract on March 29, 2021 to SJRC Texas. SJRC Texas formed Belong to serve as the SSCC. Implementation of Stage I CBC is anticipated to begin on October 4, 2021 following confirmation of readiness.

Update for Region 8A

The Region 8A catchment area includes all of Bexar County. DFPS awarded a contract to The Children's Shelter in San Antonio in August 2018. The Children's Shelter formed Family Tapestry to serve as the SSCC. After a six-month start-up period, DFPS certified readiness and Family Tapestry began accepting placement referrals on February 1, 2019.

On April 29, 2021, Family Tapestry gave formal notice to terminate its single source continuum contract with DFPS. DFPS, along with the partnership and cooperation of Family Tapestry, implemented a 60-day contingency plan to allow for the transition of services, subcontracts, and human resources to DFPS. Family Tapestry was fully engaged in the transition, and the state provided the resources necessary to make the transition successful. The contingency plan was implemented and executed during the months of May and June (2021).

As of July 1, 2021, all subcontracts for foster care placement and services were successfully transitioned back to DFPS with no disruption in services to children and youth or payments to

providers as a result of the transition. As of the time of this publication, no current decision has been made related to the re-procurement of the 8A CBC contract.

Update on CBC Expansion

As appropriated by the 87th Texas Legislature, the Office of Community-Based Care (CBC) Transition and DFPS, in partnership with HHSC, are preparing to release a new Request for Applications (RFA) to expand CBC Stage I to additional communities across the state with a focus on executing new SSCC contracts in DFPS Regions 3 East, 9, 4 and 5. The anticipated timeframe to release a new RFA is the fall of 2021. The Office of CBC Transition plans to include local stakeholders in the evaluation of proposals received from the RFA as required by the Texas Legislature. Future CBC communities may change based on the proposals received through the new RFA (see Appendix A).

Over the FY 22-23 biennium, the Office of Community-Based Care and DFPS will use additional appropriations from the 87th Texas Legislature to expand CBC Stage II in the Regions 1 and 8b communities, as well as re-solicit the SSCC contract for 3W by September 1, 2023. Initiation of the solicitation with HHSC will occur within one year prior to anticipated award date to develop and implement communication plans, identify resource transfers of staff, determine fiscal allocations and begin regional planning.

Implementation Updates on New Senate / House Bills (87th Texas Legislative Session)

Senate Bill 1896

The 87th Texas Legislature passed Senate Bill (SB) 1896, which is an omnibus bill that impacts many divisions within DFPS, including the Office of Community-Based Care Transition. As previously mentioned, SB 1896 established the Office of Community-Based Care Transition and appointed a Statewide CBC Director.

SB 1896 requires multiple updates to existing SSCC contracts, including by not limited to:

- prohibiting SSCC's from allowing a child without a placement to stay overnight in a DFPS / SSCC office;
- allowing SSCC staff to supervise children who require temporary, emergency care;
- requiring each SSCC to contract for reserve beds for children needing temporary, emergency care;
- allowing SSCC's to apply to DFPS for a waiver from any statutory and regulatory requirement to increase innovation and flexibility for achieving contractual performance outcomes; and
- allowing SSCC's to implement its own procedures to execute DFPS' statutory duties the

SSCC assumes and is not required to follow DFPS' procedures to execute the assumed department duties.

Current SSCC contracts are being updated to comply with each new statute.

Additionally, SB 1896 requires that family based-safety services (FBSS) be integrated into CBC contracts no later than January 1, 2025. DFPS and the Office of Community-Based Care Transition plan to use the FBSS pilots required through House Bill (HB) 3041, and evaluation of the FBSS pilots required through Senate Bill 910, to inform the implementation of FBSS into CBC contracts. See more information re: HB 3041 and SB 910 below.

Data Access and Standards Governance Council

Senate Bill 1896 updates the definition and requirements of the existing Data Access and Standards Governance Council, which was established by the 86th Texas Legislature in 2018. The Council has established a quarterly meeting schedule and conducted its first quarterly meeting on September 21, 2021. Quarterly Council meetings will occur in December, March, June and September each year. Sub-workgroups from the Council will meet monthly in between quarterly Council meetings.

Mentor Feasibility Study

Senate Bill 1896 requires DFPS and each SSCC, in collaboration with local governmental entities and faith and community-based organizations, to examine the feasibility of designing a volunteer mentor program for children in congregate care settings. In July 2021, DFPS formed a workgroup with representatives from each SSCC, relevant DFPS stakeholders, and community providers of mentoring programs in the state. The workgroup meets monthly to develop the mentor feasibility study, which is due to the Legislature by December 31, 2022.

Capacity Building

Senate Bill 1896 requires that HHSC, in collaboration with DFPS and each SSCC, develop a plan to increase the placement capacity in each catchment area of the state with the goal of eliminating the need to place a child outside of the child's community. The four existing SSCC's have submitted a draft Joint Capacity Building Plan to DFPS for review. The Office of Community-Based Care Transition and DFPS are working on dispersing the capacity building funding allocated by the Texas Legislature to the SSCC's.

House Bill 3041

House Bill (HB) 3041 requires DFPS to implement a pilot program in two DFPS regions (one urban and one rural) designed to provide time-limited family-focused preservation services, which include but are not limited to FFPSA services, to families of foster care candidates and pregnant or parenting foster youth. HB 3041 requires DFPS to obtain a court order from a court of competent jurisdiction to compel the family of a candidate to obtain family preservation services and complete the family preservation services plan, with the exception that DFPS is not required to obtain a court order to provide family preservation services to a pregnant or

parenting foster youth. HB 3041 calls for at least one of the DFPS regions that the pilot program is to be implemented be in a region where Community-Based Care has already been executed.

The Office of Community-Based Care Transition is collaborating with CPS, Finance, and other divisions of the agency to develop this pilot program that meets the needs of our families, children, and youth.

Senate Bill 910

Senate Bill (SB) 910 requires DFPS to develop a comprehensive list of options to implement family preservation services in existing Community-Based Care catchment areas and requires a report to the governor's office and legislative leadership by October 1, 2022.

As of September 2021, an interagency administrative contract (IAC) between DFPS and Texas A&M University began negotiations. The IAC is for the Contractor to provide a comprehensive study of options to help inform the quality implementation of family preservation services into the existing catchment areas as a part of Community-Based Care, with specific focus on operations, implementation, financial modeling, contract provisions, statutory changes, and service delivery issues.

Conclusion

The Office of Community-Based Care (CBC) Transition, along with DFPS and stakeholder partners, continue to work diligently to implement Community-Based Care in the four current communities (3b, 2, 1, 8b), expand CBC to additional communities and to lay the foundation for a successful statewide rollout. View the latest [CBC Implementation Plan](#) for additional details. An updated implementation plan is due to the Texas Legislature no later than the last day of each state fiscal biennium and will include new requirements passed during the 87th Texas Legislature.

DFPS has adapted its organization to support both the new Office of CBC Transition and ongoing assistance as more areas begin to provide services and advance to Stage II. DFPS contracted with Texas Tech University to conduct a process evaluation of each stage of Community-Based Care in each established catchment area. The process evaluation is a tool the department uses to assess implementation of Community-Based Care in each catchment area, identify the key successes and barriers, and course correct as needed. The CBC process evaluation was completed in November 2020 and can be found on the [CBC website](#). On-going process evaluation through an independent entity will continue as new areas move into CBC Stage I and II.

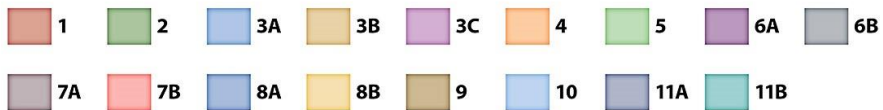
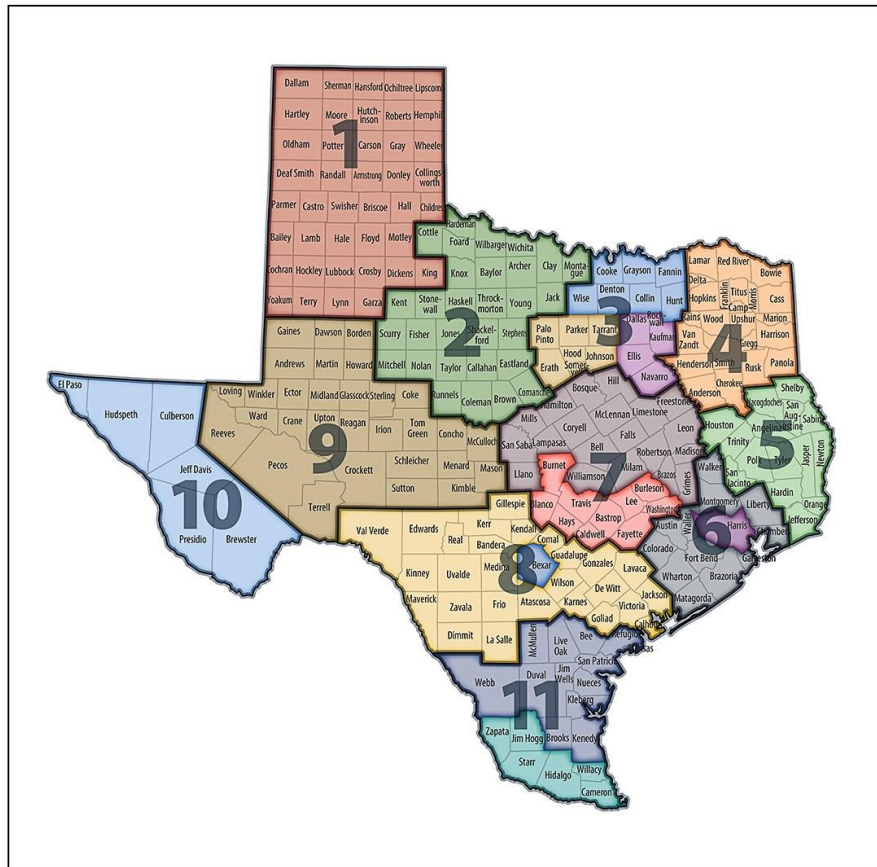
The Office of CBC Transition and DFPS continue to work with the Center for Child Welfare Data, affiliated with Chapin Hall of the University of Chicago, to support the outcome evaluation. Chapin Hall provides independent data analysis of each SSCC's performance on

placements within 50 miles and paid foster care days, the basis for the fiscal model, and incentive payments in Stage III. Moving into fiscal year 2022, Chapin Hall will begin to evaluate child outcomes in Region 3B and 2 as both OCOK and 2INGage continue to be responsible for all substitute care services to children and families in the respective catchment area. DFPS further consults with Chapin Hall on continuous quality improvement processes for oversight of Community-Based Care in stage II.

The Office of CBC Transition and DFPS are committed to transparency and will continue to meet legislated requirements for sharing implementation plans, implementation updates, and performance data.

Appendix A: Current Community-Based Care Communities

Community Based Care Catchment Areas



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ⁱ All data on children served by SSCCs is from DFPS Data Warehouse Report SA_82 run date September 1, 2021. The report approximates the number of children served by SSCCs based on legal county and living arrangement and is subject to change.