



# **House Human Services Committee Child Protective Services Reform**

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Albert Hawkins, Executive Commissioner  
Health and Human Services Commission  
February 24, 2005

# CPS Reform Overview

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- HHSC has developed a reform plan to strengthen the state's CPS program. This plan will dramatically:
  - reduce CPS staff workloads,
  - focus services on child safety, and
  - strengthen management and accountability.
- The reform plan was developed after Governor Rick Perry issued an executive order on July 2, 2004, directing HHSC to review and reform the CPS program.
- The Governor's order came in response to several cases where children died at the hands of abusers or were left in a state of abuse or neglect despite CPS involvement.

# CPS Reform Overview

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- CPS requires significant change in nearly all aspects of program operations
  - Staff unable to focus on clear mission and goals
  - Inadequate accountability to ensure safety of children

# CPS Review Findings

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- Caseload and staff turnover are too high.
- CPS needs to strengthen its focus on its core function – investigating allegations of abuse and neglect.
- CPS' relations with law enforcement and the judiciary are not adequate to protect children.
- CPS does not have adequate management controls.
- CPS does not effectively support caseworkers.

# Immediate Corrective Actions

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- Refer families unwilling to protect their child to local prosecutors
- Perform an independent review prior to closing any investigation involving children, 3 and under, when abuse and neglect cannot be ruled out
- Obtaining the services of medical professionals for on-call consultation
- Use digital cameras for forensic photography
- Accelerated hiring 123 CPS staff authorized by the 78th Legislature
- Developed an incentive program to retain experienced investigative staff

# CPS Reform Components

## Investigations and Caseload

Anne Heiligenstein  
Deputy Executive Commissioner

# Strengthen Investigations

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- Create an Office of Investigations
- 72 hour response time on all Priority 2 investigations
- Co-locate with community partners
- Alter the workweek (shift work)
- Screeners used to reduce investigations assigned
- Establish functional units
- Embed Senior Investigator in units

# CPS Reform

## OLD SYSTEM

Inefficient - all functions concentrated on a single caseworker

### Integrated Caseworker

- Investigations
  - Child safety intervention
  - Documentation
- Working With Supervisor
  - Gathering Evidence
  - Case-related travel
- Reviewing Case Histories
- Making Initial Collateral Contacts
  - Transporting Children to Visits
  - Paperwork to Initiate Services
  - Notification Letters
- Supervising Parent-Child Visits

## NEW SYSTEM

Distributed - all functions performed by most appropriate staff

### Dedicated Investigative Caseworker

- Investigations
  - Child safety intervention
  - Documentation
- Working With Supervisor
  - Gathering Evidence
  - Case-related travel

### Case Screeners

- Review Case Histories
  - Make Initial Collateral Contacts

### Senior Investigators

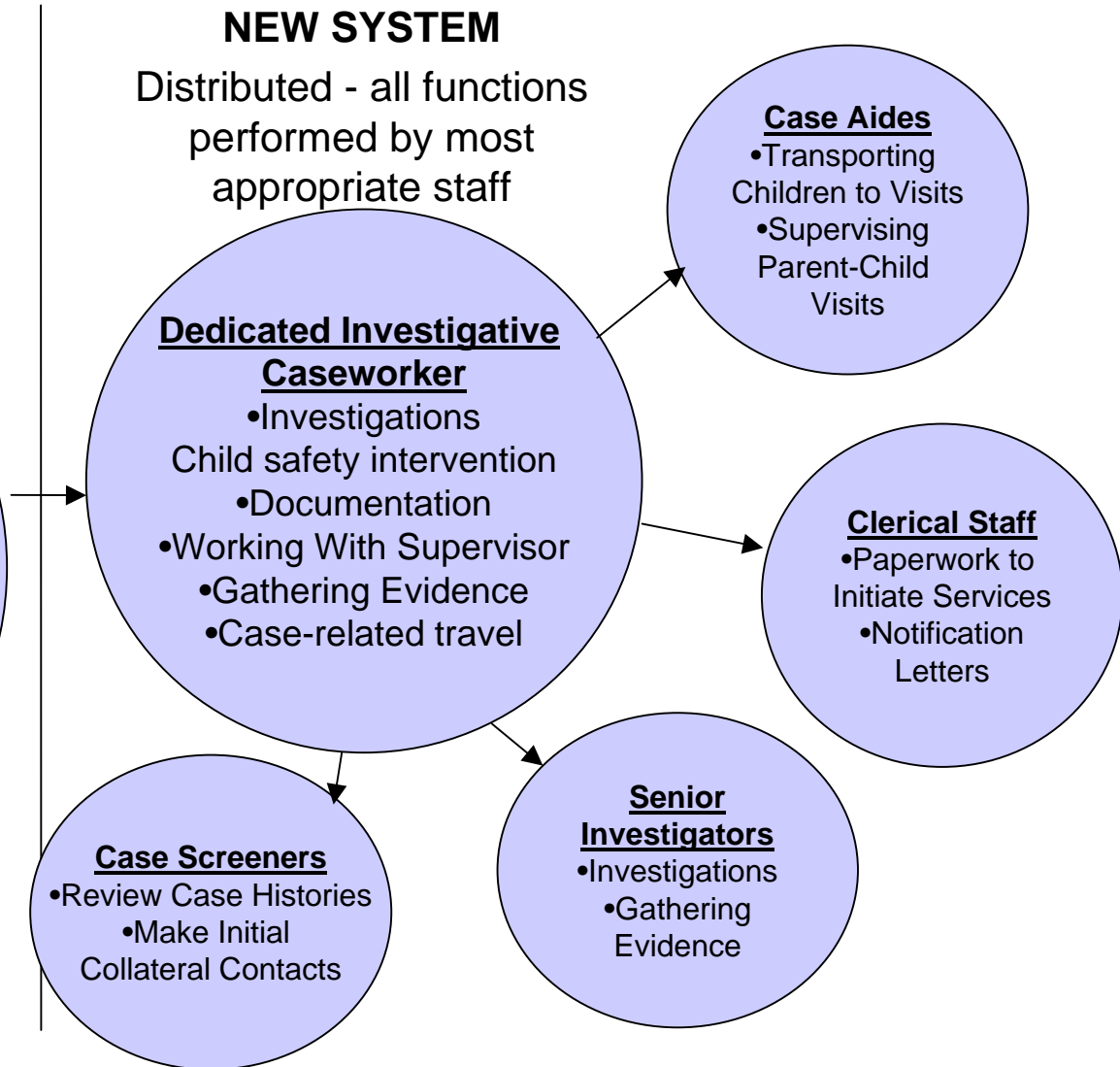
- Investigations
  - Gathering Evidence

### Case Aides

- Transporting Children to Visits
- Supervising Parent-Child Visits

### Clerical Staff

- Paperwork to Initiate Services
- Notification Letters





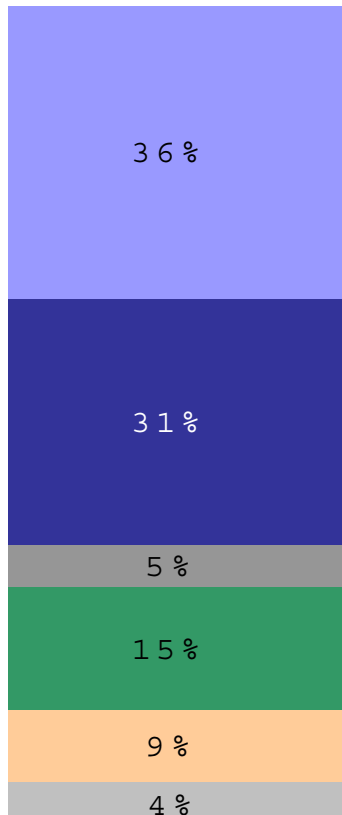
# Caseloads

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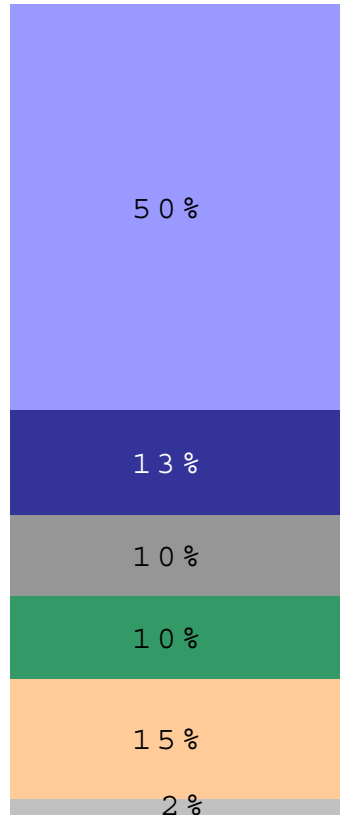
- Reduce caseloads
  - Monthly – 74 in FY 2005 to 45 in FY 2007
  - Daily – 44 in FY 2005 and 33 in FY 2007
- Reduce staff turnover
- Focus recruitment efforts
- Expand and improve caseworker training
- Deploy mobile technology
- Salary increases for direct delivery staff

# Distribution of Investigative Functions

Pre CPS Reform



Post CPS Reform



- Contact with children families & collateral
- Paperwork & documentation
- Evidence gathering
- Travel
- Consultation with supervisor
- Other activities

# CPS Reform Staffing and Caseload

	Old System	New System
Investigators	1305	1723
Senior Investigators	0	430
Investigation Screeners	6	47
Case Aides	118	430
Clerical Staff	213	454
Caseloads (Monthly/Daily)	74/44	45/33

# CPS Reform Staffing and Caseload

	Old System	Annual Salary Cost	New System	Annual Salary Cost
Investigators	1,305	\$37,740,600	1,723	\$49,829,200
Senior Investigators	0	0	430	\$14,184,800
Investigation Screeners	6	\$210,600	47	\$1,649,700
Case Aides	118	\$2,763,600	430	\$10,070,600
Clerical Staff	213	\$4,795,100	454	\$10,220,500
Caseloads (Monthly/Daily)	74/44		45/33	