

Indiana Department of Child Services

Annual Staffing and Caseload Report

to the State Budget Committee and Legislative Council

State Fiscal Year 2023

(July 2022 — June 2023)



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Executive summary

The Indiana Department of Child Services is entrusted with the well-being of Hoosier families and children in crisis. Some of the most integral among the agency's staff members are family case managers (FCMs). FCMs are the state's front line against child abuse and neglect. Maintaining manageable caseloads for staff members is critical to ensuring the agency provides the best service possible to those in need. This report serves to detail current staffing levels as they compare to ongoing need.

During State Fiscal Year 2023, Indiana law required DCS to abide by the 12/12/13 standard in accordance with the following code:

SECTION 2. IC 31-25-2-5, AS AMENDED BY P.L.128-2012, SECTION 86:

Sec. 5. (a) The department shall ensure that the department maintains staffing levels of family case managers so that each region has enough family case managers to allow caseloads to be at no more than:

(1) twelve (12) active cases relating to initial assessments, including investigations of an allegation of child abuse or neglect; or

(2) twelve (12) families monitored and supervised in active cases relating to ongoing in-home services; or

(3) thirteen (13) children monitored and supervised in active cases relating to ongoing services who are in out-of-home placements.

(b) The department shall comply with the maximum caseload ratios described in subsection (a).

Each year, DCS compiles an annual report for the Legislative Council and State Budget Committee detailing the agency's compliance with the staffing standard.

This report seeks to:

- Demonstrate agency efforts to recruit, train and retain FCMs
- Describe the methodology used to compute caseloads
- Indicate whether the statewide average caseloads for FCMs exceed agency standards, and if so:
 - Include a written plan to reduce caseloads
 - Identify best management practices and resources required to achieve effective and efficient delivery of child protection services

SFY 2023 year-end snapshot

- 1,637 field FCM staff (individuals currently carrying a caseload)
- 158 FCMs in training
- 24 additional FCMs needed to meet 12/12/13
- 10 of 19 regions met the 12/12/13 standard
- 14 of 19 regions had at least 90% of staff needed to meet the 12/12/13 standard
- Statewide staffing level met 99% of need

Note: DCS uses a six-month caseload average for reporting its compliance with the 12/12/13 standard. Not all cases are weighed evenly; e.g., in-home cases are weighted by case, while out-of-home cases are weighted by child.

Recruitment, retention and training of family case managers

The Indiana Department of Child Services is more than 4,100 strong, staffed by people committed to the well-being of Hoosier families and children. Of those employees, more than 2,100 are FCMs (includes non-caseload carrying FCMs such as Hotline, Relative Care and Foster Care Licensing) who provide critical support to Hoosier families and children in crisis. Every day, they connect those we serve with the services needed to help them recover from abuse or neglect. FCMs' dedication helps prevent future maltreatment as families rebuild and learn to provide a safe environment for the loved ones in their care.

Continuity of case management has a direct impact on the children and families the department serves. High FCM turnover can result in:

- Longer stays for children in foster care
- Delays in timely assessments of allegations of abuse and neglect
- Disruptions in child placements
- Increased rates of repeat maltreatment

Supporting family case managers is paramount to ensuring the best service for the children in DCS care. With that in mind, the agency is continually evaluating strategies to recruit the best candidates for child welfare work and retain those who have already dedicated themselves to this cause. Part of this process requires DCS to ensure front-line staff members carry manageable caseloads.

Recruitment and retention

In SFY 2022, Indiana's unemployment rate reached historic lows and DCS' talent-acquisition (TA) team faced a shortage of potential employees, while current staff left the agency for other opportunities. As unemployment rates begin to climb toward

pre-pandemic rates, the TA team worked on several initiatives to increase staffing numbers. In SFY 2023, DCS lost 739 FCMs and gained 890.

Low pay for FCMs was a deterrent to both attracting and retaining staff. The statewide compensation study conducted by the State Personnel Department addressed this by raising FCM starting salaries to \$47,320. Previously, incoming FCMs received a \$35,776 annual salary, which raised to \$40,092 after completion of a 12-week training period. The increased salary combined with reduced caseloads helped the agency with retention, though challenges remain due to the difficult nature of the work.

DCS' TA staff cast a wide net in the search for candidates, utilizing platforms such as Indeed, sponsored job posts, non-sponsored job posts and social media. DCS TA collaborated with the communications divisions from DCS and the Indiana State Personnel Department to advertise job openings via social media, flyers and posters.

Interview events were conducted in local offices with a hiring need of five or more candidates. These were advertised on social media and in job postings.

The agency conducted 25 job fairs — up from 15 the previous year — and visited 13 colleges and universities; visits were targeted toward high-need areas and events where social work and human services were the focus.

The goals of the TA team during SFY 2023 included implementing an FCM forecasting report to help better understand which local offices needed the most help with recruitment and hiring and engaging in proactive recruitment through monthly evaluation. The FCM forecasting report was created to better understand hiring needs in individual coun-

ties and eliminate the allocation process to become more proactive in hiring goals. The forecasting report provides data by designating which counties need to hire and fill open FCM positions to become fully compliant based on how many current case-load-carrying FCMs are needed. This process allows individual counties to have goals and be given the allowance to hire based on actual need and vacancies.

The forecasting report has also eliminated counties having FCM requisitions open when there is no hiring need. This process allows hiring managers to know when to post a requisition, providing TA staff an opening to drive candidate flow toward. The report also provided an outlook on the impact of recruitment efforts regarding future compliance. By reviewing the forecasting report, the TA team was able to further evaluate hiring needs for individual counties.

Monthly evaluations allowed the TA team to view metrics such as time to hire/time to fill, churn, vacancy rate, application rate, applications over 20 days, requisitions over 60 days, and days in status for hire. Monthly metrics allowed for prioritization of recruitment needs.

Training

FCMs receive specialized training to ensure they are thoroughly prepared to assess allegations of child abuse and neglect. FCMs go through a comprehensive program, including 12 weeks of training before taking on a full caseload.

The FCM Cohort training program (Essential Train-

ing) comprises 20 classroom days and 40 local office “transfer of learning” days where trainees apply what they have learned. In addition to the classroom training, 10 computer-assisted trainings (CATs) were developed for new FCMs to complete at their local offices. The training ensures new FCMs receive ample time in the local office to gain hands-on experience relative to their area of work. New DCS employees are not immediately tasked with an entire caseload. Incoming FCMs take on smaller caseloads that are built upon as their comfort level grows. They also receive training (Intermediate Training) over the next four to six months, including 10 classroom days, three CATs, and completion of the Child and Family Team Meeting (CFTM) certification. In addition, new FCMs receive three classroom trainings in months seven to 12 (Advanced Training).

DCS begins a new training cohort every two weeks. In the last fiscal year, DCS held 39 cohorts with 541 cohort graduates.

DCS continues to focus on leadership trainings for directors, supervisors and regional managers. DCS concluded the “Coach Approach” series with “Coaching a Multigenerational Workforce.” In SFY 2022, DCS rolled out the “Coach Approach” series, which is a leadership coaching series training for quarterly leadership workshops. In SFY 2023, staff received the fourth leadership training in the series, “Coaching the Multigenerational Workforce.” Leadership also received “Leading Teams Using Quality Assurance” as part of the leadership quarterly workshop, and field staff received “Engaging FCMs” as a leadership quarterly workshop.

Staff caseload data

Management Gateway for Indiana’s Kids (MaGIK), the DCS case-management system, captures information monthly about current staffing levels and caseloads. This data helps

agency leaders, in conjunction with the human resources department, determine which regions are in the greatest need of additional employees.

MaGIK tracks new assessments opened each month, as well as ongoing cases, broken down by county. PeopleSoft, the state's human resources information system, compiles staffing levels, including total staff, staff in training, and staff unavailable for other reasons (such as leaves of absence).

DCS is organized into 18 geographical regions, with each region comprised of between one and seven counties. Also, the department created the central office region to encompass FCMs from the institutional assessment unit and the collaborative care unit, for a total of 19 regions.

The forecasting report and monthly metrics allow for improved county-based job postings, which give each manager in the regions the ability to pipeline candidates for when they do have allocations and to collaboratively share candidates with other nearby counties. This also allows the candidate more flexibility in choosing their desired location.

Methodology used to compute caseloads

House Enrolled Act 1006 (2019) updated the DCS caseload standard to align with Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) best practices. CWLA standards at the time recommended the following: No more than 12 cases (i.e., families) per month for caseworkers conducting child protection assessments; No more than 17 family cases for caseworkers providing ongoing support to families involved in child protective services and no more than 12 cases if caseworkers are conducting family-centered casework; or no more than 12 to 15 children in out-of-home care.

There is no universal caseload standard governing all states, and most states do not have caseload standards codified in statute. Moreover, many states weigh cases differently in calculating caseload compliance, which means case counts are not a function of just volume, but also complexity.

To provide the most accurate reflection of caseloads, the methodology used to compile this report:

- Removes specialized FCMs who do not carry caseloads (e.g., hotline intake specialists, foster-care and relative-care specialists, and staff in training) from the 12/12/13 caseload analysis
- Utilizes a six-month caseload average to measure compliance
- Highlights current caseload trends, providing a more accurate representation that allows the agency to make better staffing and management decisions
- Residential placements are weighted at 100% of the value of a traditional child in need of services (CHINS) case

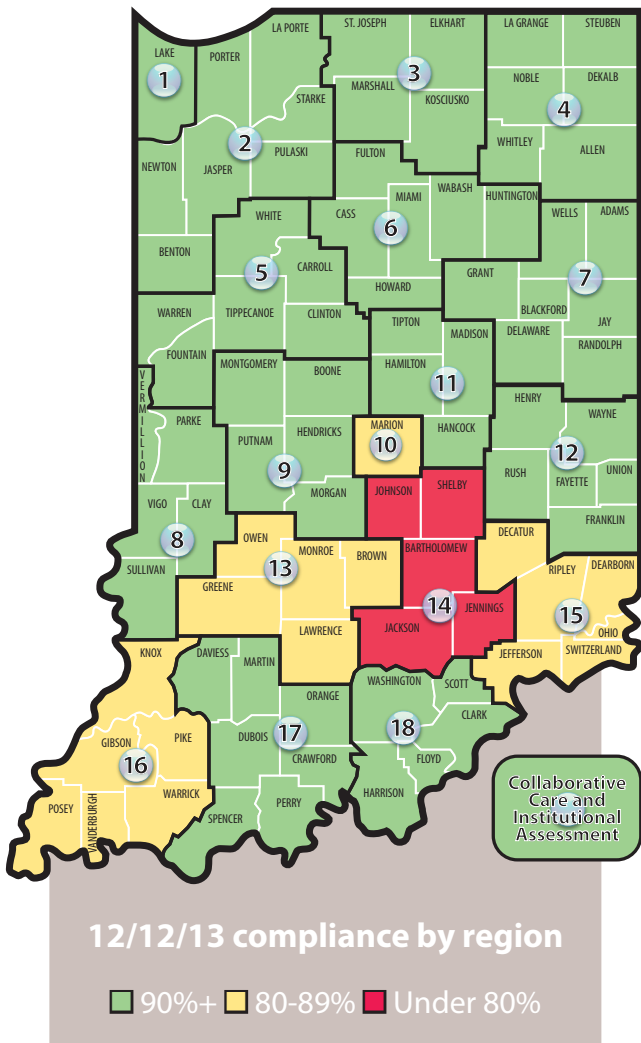
DCS strives to hire to 120% of its six-month average need of family case managers during October, November, and December of each year to be prepared for one of the busiest times each year, which is March through May.

Compliance with standards and plans to reduce caseloads

SFY 2023 reflects a significant downward trend in the number of cases handled by DCS. At the end of the state fiscal year, DCS had a total of 14,163 children (including informal adjustments, collaborative care and CHINS), compared with 15,838 children the prior year.

At the end of SFY 2023, the agency staffing level was at 99% of need for the standard, with 10 of 19 regions meeting the 12/12/13 standard.

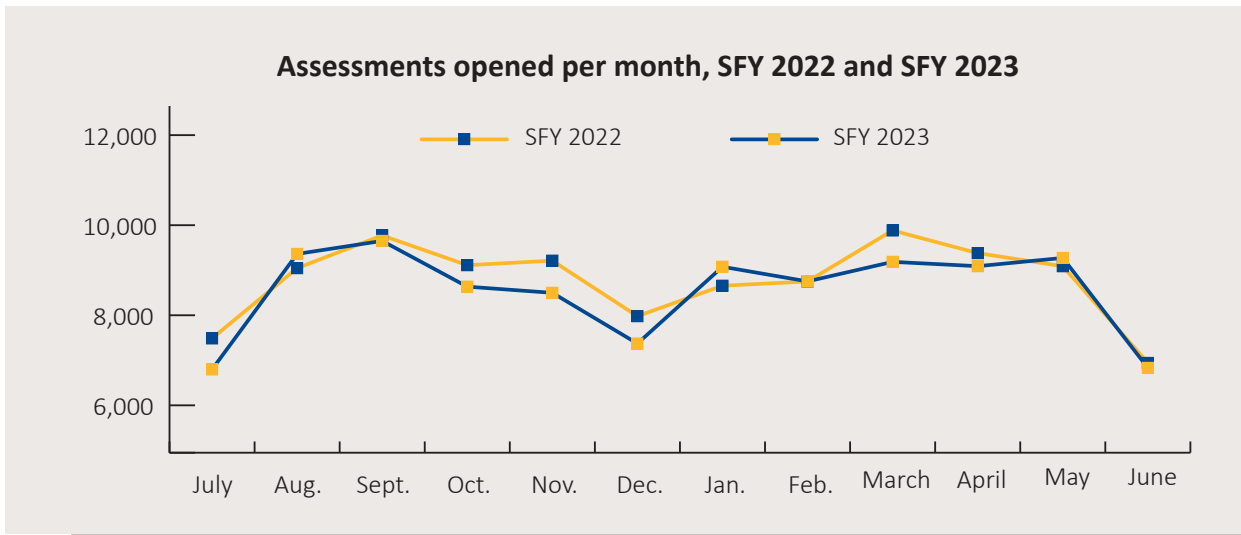
This number is calculated in each region in this manner: six-month average number of FCMs needed minus the number of FCMs already deployed to the field or still in training. FCM trainees are removed from the calculation because they represent existing workers that will be able to carry caseloads in the near future.



In addition to analyzing data regarding ongoing cases, DCS evaluates the number of assessments opened each month. Staffing to meet the 12/12/13 standard is particularly challenging because of the fluctuation in reports DCS receives each month. This trend continued in SFY 2023, as evidenced by the range of assessments between the highest month total (9,362) and the lowest (6,797).

Assessments opened per month and change from SFY 2022

- **July 2022:** 6,797 (-9.20%)
- **August 2022:** 9,362 (+3.49%)
- **September 2022:** 9,651 (-1.24%)
- **October 2022:** 8,635 (-5.23%)
- **November 2022:** 8,498 (-7.75%)
- **December 2022:** 7,372 (-7.62%)
- **January 2023:** 9,077 (+4.86%)
- **February 2023:** 8,752 (+0.02%)
- **March 2023:** 9,186 (-7.05%)
- **April 2023:** 9,090 (-3.09%)
- **May 2023:** 9,273 (+2.02%)
- **June 2023:** 6,832 (-1.57%)



Effective and efficient delivery of child protection services

During SFY 2023, DCS recorded several major successes in its effort to achieve the agency vision that children will live in safe, healthy and supportive families and communities:

- Performance-measure successes:
 - Fewer families in need of formal intervention
 - Fewer children in residential care
 - Fewer children who experienced repeat maltreatment
 - Improved ratio of supervisors to case managers
- Advocated for funding in the most recent budget bill to increase supports to unlicensed kinship caregivers, providing \$300 per month per child to kinship caregivers
- Increased the number of local transition houses, which help in assisting and caring for children awaiting placement
- Implemented internal process for identifying and staffing high-acuity youth in need of placement and resources
- Maintained strong partnerships with providers, ensuring they have the resources needed to achieve the shared vision of seeing all children grow up in stable, supportive homes

Hotline

The Indiana Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline is staffed by trained intake-specialist FCMs and at least one supervisor on every shift, 24 hours per day, 365 days per year. Intake specialists ask callers thorough questions to obtain comprehensive information about each potential case, including factors that could impact worker safety. They enter these details into DCS' intake system and note whether the information provided meets statutory criteria for an assessment. The local DCS office makes a final decision whether to open an assessment. While the hotline has historically seen an increase in reports year over year, there has been a recent plateau and reduction in the number of reports generated:

- SFY 2016: 211,502
- SFY 2017: 235,609
- SFY 2018: 247,658
- SFY 2019: 240,756
- SFY 2020: 225,872
- SFY 2021: 230,246
- SFY 2022: 218,614
- SFY 2023: 210,654

From SFY 2016 to SFY 2019, the hotline received a 14% increase in reports. This is believed to be due in large part to increased awareness of the hotline. In SFY 2023, the hotline saw a 4% reduction in reports since the previous year.

Exhibit 1

12/12/13 Staffing and Caseload Report, State Fiscal Year 2023

County Name	6-Month Average Number of FCMs Needed ¹	Available FCMs Carrying Full Caseload ²	Additional FCMs Needed ³	Percentage Of Need Filled by FCMs Carrying Full Caseloads ⁴	FCMs in Training ⁵	FCMs Needed Minus FCMs in Training ⁶
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Statewide

Total	1,661	1,637	24	99%	158	(134)
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Central Office

Total	66	71	(5)	108%	0	(5)
Collaborative Care	54	59	(5)	109%	0	(5)
Institutional Unit	12	12	0	100%	0	0

Region 1

Total	92	106	(14)	115%	1	(15)
Lake	92	106	(14)	115%	1	(15)

Region 2

Total	70	66	4	94%	9	(5)
Benton/Newton*	6	5	1	83%	1	0
Jasper	5	6	(1)	120%	0	(1)
Laporte	30	24	6	80%	6	0
Porter	19	19	0	100%	1	(1)
Pulaski	3	5	(2)	167%	0	(2)
Starke	7	7	0	100%	1	(1)

*Combined office

¹Average number of caseload-carrying field FCMs needed to meet 12/12/13 standard as of 6/30/23

²Number of caseload-carrying field FCMs as of 6/30/23

³Additional FCMs needed to meet 12/12/13 standard as of 6/30/23 (Column 2 minus Column 3)

⁴Percentage of staff need that was filled as of 6/30/23 (Column 3 divided by Column 2)

⁵The number of FCMs in training as of 6/30/23

⁶Additional FCMs needed to meet 12/12/13 standard, after taking into account those currently in training, as of 6/30/23 (Column 4 minus Column 6)

Note: Staff numbers are rounded to the nearest 1 person. Some figures may be slightly off because of rounding.

■ = 90% or more ■ = 80-89%
■ = 79% or less

County Name	6-Month Average Number of FCMs Needed	Available FCMs Carrying Full Caseload	Additional FCMs Needed	Percentage Of Need Filled by FCMs Carrying Full Caseloads	FCMs in Training	FCMs Needed Minus FCMs in Training
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Region 3

Total	119	110	9	92%	10	(1)
Elkhart	33	29	4	88%	2	2
Kosciusko	14	18	(4)	129%	0	(4)
Marshall	6	8	(2)	133%	0	(2)
St. Joseph	66	55	11	83%	8	3

Region 4

Total	140	139	1	99%	14	(13)
Allen	101	98	3	97%	13	(10)
Dekalb	11	10	1	91%	1	0
LaGrange	5	6	(1)	120%	0	(1)
Noble	9	10	(1)	111%	0	(1)
Steuben	7	7	0	100%	0	0
Whitley	7	8	(1)	114%	0	(1)

Region 5

Total	52	56	(4)	108%	5	(9)
Carroll	3	4	(1)	133%	0	(1)
Clinton	6	6	0	100%	1	(1)
Fountain/Warren*	5	4	1	80%	0	1
Tippecanoe	31	34	(3)	110%	4	(7)
White	7	8	(1)	114%	0	(1)

*Combined office

County Name	6-Month Average Number of FCMs Needed	Available FCMs Carrying Full Caseload	Additional FCMs Needed	Percentage Of Need Filled by FCMs Carrying Full Caseloads	FCMs in Training	FCMs Needed Minus FCMs in Training
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Region 6

Total	59	71	(12)	120%	5	(17)
Cass	7	8	(1)	114%	0	(1)
Fulton	6	8	(2)	133%	0	(2)
Howard	21	26	(5)	124%	4	(9)
Huntington	9	12	(3)	133%	0	(3)
Miami	9	9	0	100%	1	(1)
Wabash	7	8	(1)	114%	0	(1)

Region 7

Total	91	113	(22)	124%	3	(25)
Adams	8	10	(2)	125%	0	(2)
Blackford	4	6	(2)	150%	0	(2)
Delaware	31	38	(7)	123%	1	(8)
Grant	28	34	(6)	121%	1	(7)
Jay	7	7	0	100%	1	(1)
Randolph	7	9	(2)	129%	0	(2)
Wells	6	9	(3)	150%	0	(3)

County Name	6-Month Average Number of FCMs Needed	Available FCMs Carrying Full Caseload	Additional FCMs Needed	Percentage Of Need Filled by FCMs Carrying Full Caseloads	FCMs in Training	FCMs Needed Minus FCMs in Training
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Region 8

Total	77	86	(9)	112%	8	(17)
Clay	10	12	(2)	120%	0	(2)
Parke/Vermillion*	8	10	(2)	125%	0	(2)
Sullivan	7	7	0	100%	1	(1)
Vigo	52	57	(5)	110%	7	(12)

*Combined office

Region 9

Total	69	71	(2)	103%	5	(7)
Boone	10	11	(1)	110%	1	(2)
Hendricks	19	18	1	95%	2	(1)
Montgomery	11	10	1	91%	2	(1)
Morgan	18	21	(3)	117%	0	(3)
Putnam	11	11	0	100%	0	0

Region 10

Total	264	234	30	89%	33	(3)
Marion East	67	59	8	88%	9	(1)
Marion North	62	53	9	85%	8	1
Marion South	62	56	6	90%	8	(2)
Marion West	73	66	7	90%	8	(1)

County Name	6-Month Average Number of FCMs Needed	Available FCMs Carrying Full Caseload	Additional FCMs Needed	Percentage Of Need Filled by FCMs Carrying Full Caseloads	FCMs in Training	FCMs Needed Minus FCMs in Training
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Region 11

Total	107	108	(1)	101%	13	(14)
Hamilton	25	29	(4)	116%	0	(4)
Hancock	13	15	(2)	115%	0	(2)
Madison	65	58	7	89%	13	(6)
Tipton	4	6	(2)	150%	0	(2)

Region 12

Total	49	49	0	100%	6	(6)
Fayette	7	9	(2)	129%	0	(2)
Franklin/Union*	5	6	(1)	120%	0	(1)
Henry	12	14	(2)	117%	1	(3)
Rush	5	4	1	80%	0	1
Wayne	20	16	4	80%	5	(1)

*Combined office

Region 13

Total	63	55	8	87%	7	1
Brown	4	4	0	100%	0	0
Greene	8	9	(1)	113%	0	(1)
Lawrence	18	16	2	89%	2	0
Monroe	28	21	7	75%	3	4
Owen	5	5	0	100%	2	(2)

County Name	6-Month Average Number of FCMs Needed	Available FCMs Carrying Full Caseload	Additional FCMs Needed	Percentage Of Need Filled by FCMs Carrying Full Caseloads	FCMs in Training	FCMs Needed Minus FCMs in Training
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Region 14

Total	68	50	18	74%	12	6
Bartholomew	17	9	8	53%	4	4
Jackson	11	12	(1)	109%	0	(1)
Jennings	8	8	0	100%	0	0
Johnson	22	14	8	64%	6	2
Shelby	10	7	3	70%	2	1

Region 15

Total	41	35	6	85%	6	0
Dearborn/Ohio*	12	6	6	50%	4	2
Decatur	7	7	0	100%	0	0
Jefferson	10	13	(3)	130%	1	(4)
Ripley	8	4	4	50%	1	3
Switzerland	4	5	(1)	125%	0	(1)

*Combined office

Region 16

Total	103	90	13	87%	11	2
Gibson	7	6	1	86%	1	0
Knox	15	16	(1)	107%	1	(2)
Pike	3	4	(1)	133%	0	(1)
Posey	9	7	2	78%	2	0
Vanderburgh	58	44	14	76%	7	7
Warrick	11	13	(2)	118%	0	(2)

County Name	6-Month Average Number of FCMs Needed	Available FCMs Carrying Full Caseload	Additional FCMs Needed	Percentage Of Need Filled by FCMs Carrying Full Caseloads	FCMs in Training	FCMs Needed Minus FCMs in Training
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Region 17

Total	45	48	(3)	107%	4	(7)
Crawford	4	5	(1)	125%	1	(2)
Daviess	8	10	(2)	125%	0	(2)
Dubois	8	7	1	88%	1	0
Martin	2	3	(1)	150%	0	(1)
Orange	8	7	1	88%	1	0
Perry	8	7	1	88%	1	0
Spencer	7	9	(2)	129%	0	(2)

Region 18

Total	88	79	9	90%	6	3
Clark	28	23	5	82%	4	1
Floyd	28	24	4	86%	0	4
Harrison	9	7	2	78%	1	1
Scott	17	19	(2)	112%	1	(3)
Washington	6	6	0	100%	0	0

Prepared by the Office of Data Management, Reports and Analysis. Source: MaGIK Monthly Data

