



Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

Department of Human Services

500 Summer St.
Salem, OR 97301



April 24, 2025

Joint Committee on Legislative Audits
Oregon State Capitol 900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Use of Family Services to Limit Foster Care (Report 2020-26)

Work with System of Care Advisory Council on identifying areas of need for behavioral health services in the state.

Representative Sanchez asked about specific recommendations by agencies for the behavioral health needs in the state.

ODHS Child Welfare sits on Oregon's System of Care Advisory Council which acts as a central, impartial forum for statewide policy development, funding strategy recommendations and planning. The council's goal is to improve the effectiveness and efficacy of child-serving state agencies and the continuum of care that provides services to youth (ages 0-25).

ODHS Child Welfare Director Aprille Flint-Gerner is a voting member of the council alongside agency leadership from ODDS, OJD, OYA, OHA, and DOE. Agency representatives serve alongside the broader council which is made up of youth and families who are using Oregon's systems to get their needs met, and those who have been failed by our systems, to improve how those systems operate, communicate with one another, and ultimately, how well they provide the services youth and families need across Oregon.

Together this group is legislatively mandated to convene and make recommendations on state agency budgets and [develop a long-term plan for](#)

[Oregon's System of Care](#) which the 2022-2025 system of care strategic plan is found at this [link](#).

The council makes annual recommendations in which they identify needs and make specific agency and legislative recommendations. The last recommendations were made on September 13th 2024 found at this [link](#). The following recommendations were made to the legislature found within that report:

- The Legislature should direct OHA to require Coordinated Care Organizations (CCOs) ensure all assessments and supports identified by those assessments are provided, regardless of whether providers exist in network or not.
- The Legislature should direct OHA to revise [Intensive In-Home Behavioral Health Treatment \(IIBHT\)](#) rules ensure communities of all sizes and diversities across Oregon can stand up the IIBHT program
- The Legislature should direct OHA to work with CCOs to maximize Federal funding matching for IIBHT services
- The Legislature should direct OHA to revise [Mobile Response and Stabilization Services \(MRSS\)](#) rules to ensure communities of all sizes and diversities across Oregon can stand up MRSS services
- The Legislature should fully fund MRSS services in the 2025 Session.
- The Legislature should increase funding for [Employment Related Day Care \(ERDC\)](#)
- The Legislature should provide the necessary resources to establish service delivery infrastructure and fund the staff to provide the services for [SB 1557 \(2024\)](#) in the 2025-2027 budget.
- The Legislature should fully fund both [Oregon School-Based Health Centers](#) and [School-Based Mental Health Partnerships](#) programs to ensure students are able to thrive at school and in their communities.

Additionally, the council has put forward the following legislation in the 2025 legislative session for consideration:

- [House Bill 3835](#) Seeking to address Oregon’s statutory definitions of "wrongful restraint" and "wrongful seclusion" which are inconsistent, causing confusion among mandatory reporters, families, and youth.
- [House Bill 2924](#) Seeking to adjust the council’s composition by adding more representation by those receiving services for themselves or families members.

Recommendation 7 – Are there findings?

Representative Sanchez asked if there were specific findings by the peer review of the Child Welfare reunification algorithm recommended by the secretary of state.

Recommendation 7 of the Secretary of state audit was that Office of Reporting Research Analytics and Implementation (ORRAI)’s efforts to account for racial bias receive an independent review, either through peer-reviewed studies or commissioned experts.

The peer review of the Child Welfare reunification algorithm and fairness procedure was published in volume 145 of the Children and Youth Services Review and is available at this [link](#).

The review found that this approach though similar to other post-processing group-specific thresholding methods, is novel in its use and presents the opportunity to critically and broadly influence the equity and fairness implications of a Child Welfare jurisdiction’s automated decision processes.

Child Welfare worked with ORRAI to pilot the tool. Feedback from the pilot was given, and ORRAI continues to work on refining the tool.

Question about 2022 CIRT Data

Representative Boice asked how many of those youth lost during 2022 in which a CIRT was conducted were in a transition between state care and custody and into the foster care system.

This question has been interpreted to mean how many youth of the 30 child fatalities in 2022 were in ODHS custody.

Of the 30 child fatalities during 2022 one fatality was a child in the custody of ODHS at the time of the critical incident. The circumstances surrounding this death involved an unsafe sleep environment for an infant and can be reviewed at this [link](#). No other fatality during 2022 involved a child in the custody of ODHS at the time of the critical incident.

ODHS makes CIRT review data available on its public website and additional data can be reviewed at this [link](#).

ADPC & Preservation

Representative Sanchez asked if there is specific coordination with the Alcohol and Drug Policy Commission on family preservation efforts.

Members of the Alcohol & Drug Policy Commission are participating in the review and selection of services that will be included in our next Title IV-E Prevention Plan which will be submitted this year. Deputy Director Lacey Andresen represents ODHS Child Welfare on the Commission.

Implementation of Family First

The Senator Lieber and Senator Bonham requested additional information on the implementation of the [Family First Prevention Services Act](#) and related POP 112 the agency has put forward in 2025.

Site locations

Below you will find a map of the current demonstration sites.

Cohort 1:

- District 2 - Alberta Office
- District 6 - Douglas Co.
- District 11 - Klamath Co.

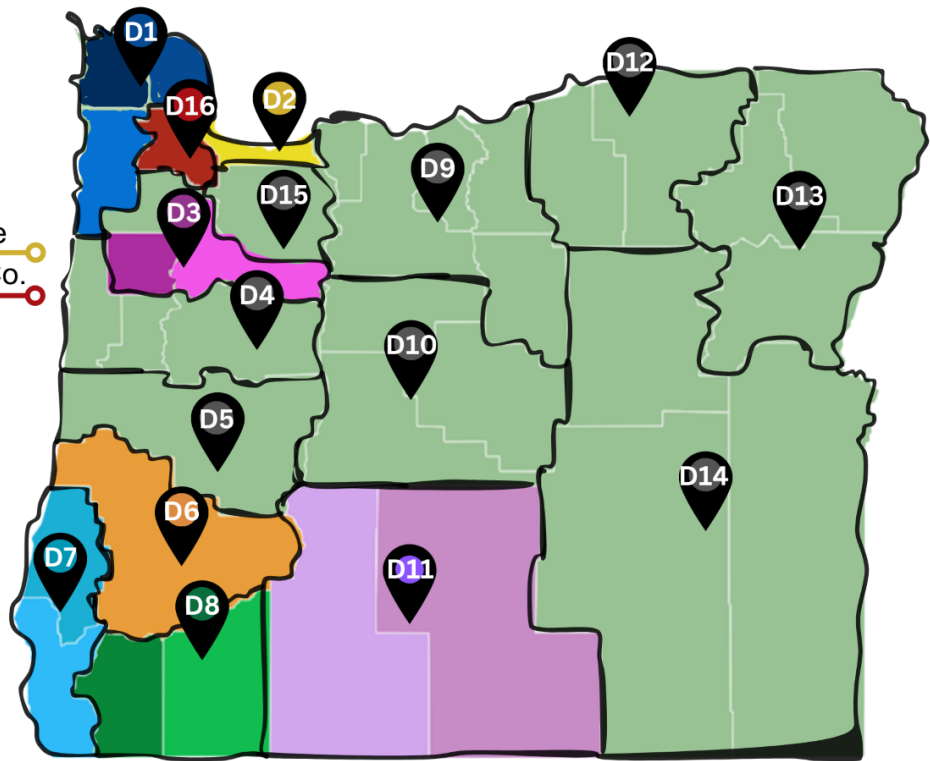
Cohort 2:

- District 2 - Gresham Office
- District 16 - Washington Co.
- District 3 - Polk Co.
- District 7 - Coos Co.
- Curry Co.
- District 8 - Jackson Co.
- Josephine Co.

Cohort 3:

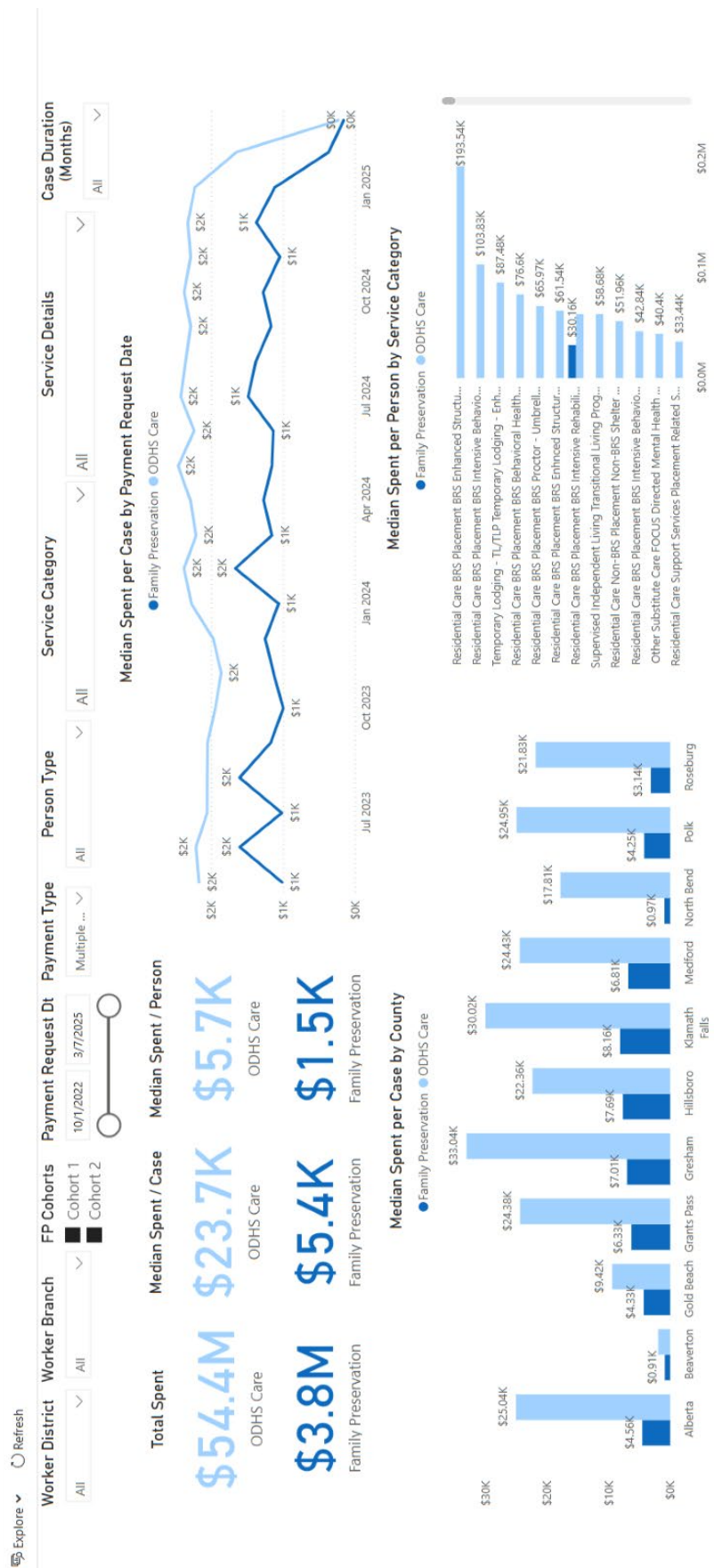
- District 1 - Clatsop Co.
- Columbia Co.
- Tillamook Co.
- District 3 - Marion Co.

Current Demonstration Sites



Service Costs

Regarding service costs of serving families in-home versus in foster care, we can say that in our Family Preservation Demonstration Sites we are seeing that the costs of services for in-home cases are about 1/4 the cost per case compared to cases served in foster care. This is shown below as direct information from the Family Preservation Financial Dashboard in which we can see a clear difference in costs.



Current services

As of March 14, 2024, families of 147 children have been served by a Family First Prevention Service. Prior to the end of the biennium, we anticipate finalizing at least two additional contracts - one with Family Skill Builders which will serve 41 families per month, and one with Deschutes County Juvenile Department which will serve 24 families each month.

We are currently partnering with the Nine Tribes in Oregon and providers in 12 counties

- Benton
- Clackamas
- Crook
- Deschutes
- Jackson
- Jefferson
- Lane
- Lincoln
- Malheur
- Marion
- Multnomah
- Washington

Anticipated expansion under POP 112

We are anticipating serving approximately 1000 families if we receive the amount requested in our POP.

Additional information is attached showing the number of contracts, families served and anticipated expansion dates in the March 2025 Responses to the legislative fiscal office that goes into further detail.

[Family First POP - Responses to Questions for LFO 3.14.25.pdf](#)