July 2020

The Vision

News and updates from and about the Kentucky Department for Community Based Services

Marta Miranda-Straub, Commissioner

Miranda-Straub named Commissioner

Pledges to effect 'lasting impact' to lift staff, families

DCBS welcomes new Commissioner Marta Miranda-Straub, who began her appointment on July 1.

Miranda-Straub said she identifies as "Cubalachain" – "Cuban by birth and Appalachian by the grace of God." She came to the US at age 12 and has lived in Kentucky for more than 30 years. "I fell in love with the people and the mountains and lived in a little log cabin in a holler between Mount Vernon and Berea. I became a U.S. citizen then – I realized I was home."

She brings 47 years' social work practice experience – at multiple levels – to this leadership position. Miranda-Straub has served families and children through trauma, substance abuse, domestic violence and sexual assault intervention and gender equity and anti-racism activism and has pledged to intensify the department's response in these areas.

Miranda-Straub retired two and a half years ago after serving seven years as President/CEO of Louisville's Center for Women and Families, a $6 million dollar nonprofit that serves more than 8,000 clients each year with rape crisis and domestic violence services for survivors and their children.

"It was supposed to be the capstone of my career. I realized I was only getting trained to come to you all," she recently told department leadership.

It was the chance to work with Secretary Eric Friedlander and Gov. Andy Beshear as part of Team Kentucky that convinced Miranda-Straub to leave retirement and accept her first position in government.

"I am incredibly honored to be at the table with all of you," she said. "I have an incredible amount of respect for the hard work that you do with limited resources."

Her many accomplishments include several collaborations with the cabinet.

DCBS Commissioner Marta Miranda-Straub

While a professor/administrator at EKU for 17 years, Miranda-Straub helped to establish the Public Child Welfare Certification Program and consulted with the EEO office to design the Limited English Proficiency office to improve translation that enabled more Kentuckians to access services.

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Watch Commissioner Miranda-Straub's video message to staff: https://youtu.be/N-DJZTP-rlE

Commissioner Miranda-Straub meets virtually with DCBS leadership on July 6.

Miranda-Straub brings 47 years' experience to DCBS

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Commissioner Miranda-Straub records an introduction video for DCBS staff. Watch the video: https://youtu.be/N-DJZTP-rlE

Miranda-Straub said she likes to work at a sustainable systems level with a strong infrastructure, and everything else is developed on that foundation.

"I'll be talking to everyone in the department about what is solid and sustainable here and what needs to shift," she said. "We do have good opportunity with COVID-19 – the silver lining of the emergency - where we can make innovative and creative change that's going to give lasting impact. With the pandemic, the movement of Black Lives Matter, and a focus on improving child welfare, we do have the chance to redefine our language and who we are," she said.

Miranda-Straub said she stands alongside staff to address the systemic and institutional barriers that keep Kentucky children, youth, adults and families from thriving.

"Poverty, addiction, mental health, child abuse, neglect and homelessness are ravaging our state," she said. "We now know better, so we must do better and we will do better. Kentuckians are a proud people, with a rich and long history of self-sufficiency and survival. Let us join hands and build a strong safety net together. It is our current charge to dive deeply into addressing root causes and co-create systemic, structural and sustainable systems change to better the lives of children, adults and families across the state."

Miranda-Straub has recorded a special message to DCBS staff. Watch it here: https://youtu.be/N-DJZTP-rlE

Read more about Miranda-Straub's background and appointment here: https://bit.ly/3ffWT2e

Protection and Permanency - Adult Services

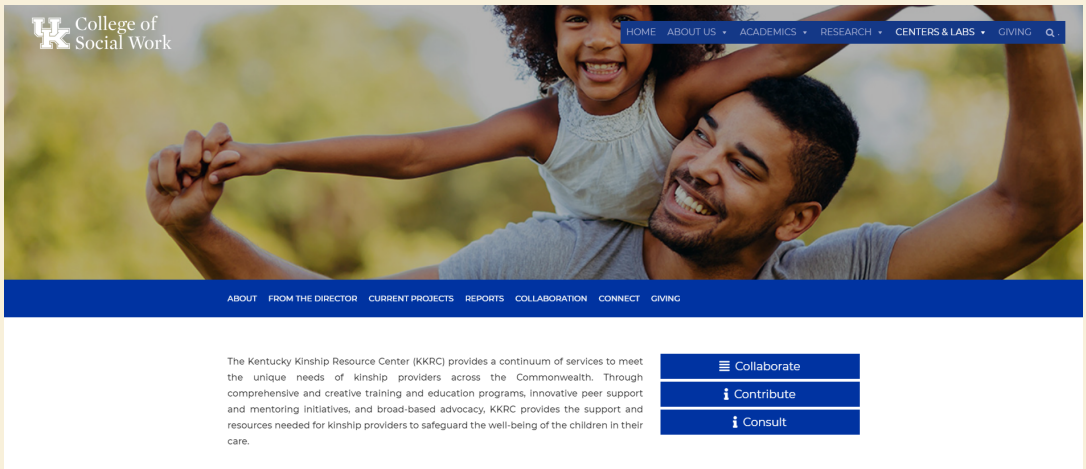
- June 15 was World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. Adult Protection Branch staff coordinated with DCBS communications staff to share and distribute elder abuse awareness tools, tips and resources through department social media.
- The Central Office liaison to the Local Coordinating Councils on Elder Abuse (LCCEA) continues monthly communication with the statewide councils and is working with the councils on a yearlong initiative "Connect to End Elder Abuse." This initiative will focus on connectedness and the importance it plays in all aspects of an adult's life.
- Key Metrics:
  - The total number of APS intakes that met criteria for May 2020 was 660 compared to 1013 that met criteria in May 2019. This is a 34.8% decrease.
  - The Adult Protection Branch received 12 Notice of Fatalities for the month of May, and none reported to be COVID 19 related. The numbers have not increased in comparing 2019 data.
  - As of June 15, 2020, APS data for the total number of active APS reports compared to 2019 data shows there has been a 29.59% decrease.

WORLD ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY
Building Strong Support for Elders

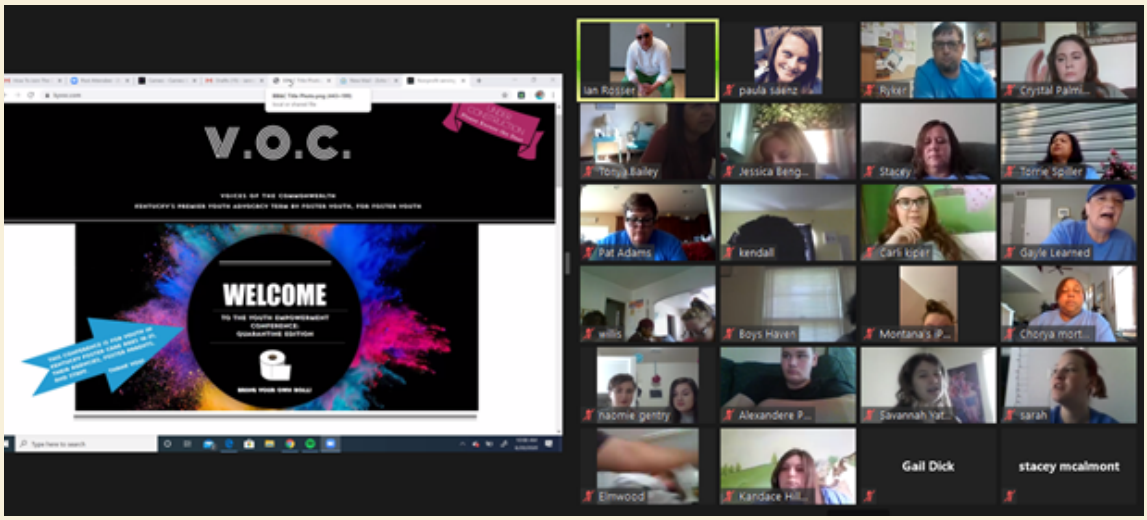
Child Care

- Child care programs were allowed to reopen beginning June 8 for in-home programs and June 15 for center-based programs. Programs that chose not to reopen on these dates received an extension until July 15, 2020, to obtain staffing, purchase Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), and/or install temporary walls. As the Division of Child Care (DCC) transitions back to regular program guidelines for child care providers, these are important target dates (unless circumstances necessitate an adjustment):
  - Beginning on July 15, DCC stops paying parent co-pays for licensed, certified, and registered child care providers. That will allow child care programs to give adequate notification to families.
  - By August 31, Limited Duration Centers (LDC) programs must transition back to a licensed or certified program.
  - On October 1, the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) returns to payment by attendance (not on enrollment) for licensed, certified, and registered providers.
- Up to 38,000 Kentucky child care providers will be required to complete mandatory training to fulfill requirements to re-open their programs, as part of Kentucky's response to COVID-19. Using a rapid development design, DCC and Child Care Aware staff developed and implemented ECE 020: Requirements for Reopening Child Care in Kentucky. This training is offered at no cost to providers through HDI's Online Learning Center found at https://hdilearning.org.
- The National Background Check Program (NBCP) - KARES system has not yet resumed in-person government services for new fingerprint applications. During this time, new child care providers will submit name-based background checks (DCC-374 & KSP Criminal Records Check) prior to starting employment in the center. Once the fingerprint background system reopens, the employees will submit through the KARES system.
- Expiration dates for the CCAP clients with renewal months of March, April, and May received a three-month extension. Clients that found themselves unemployed or with reduced work hours also received extended grace periods. On July 1, DCC returned to regular CCAP eligibility rules.
- In partnership with Child Care Aware, ECE-TRIS has developed an electronic data sharing process to capture training completion information. ECE-TRIS is also finalizing a new data entry area that will allow trainers to set up programs for independent study, online learning courses, and the new Personal Information Form, which will allow anyone to create their own account. Design has begun with anticipated development starting in July.
- 922 KAR 2:090 and 2:100 (licensure and certification requirements for child care facilities and homes) were filed in October 2019 in order to include requirements on contract substitute child care center employees. These amendments also include a timeframe that is consistent for all employees to complete annual training beyond their first year (rather than one facility having a different training deadline for every staff member). These amendments are anticipated to go into effect in the near future.
- A new emergency administrative regulation, 922 KAR 2:400E, was filed on June 8, 2020, to include additional health and sanitation requirements for certified family child care homes and licensed child care centers that wish to reopen amid the COVID-19 pandemic. This status of this administrative regulation will be impacted by recent court order and its placement on the July 13 Administrative Regulation Review Subcommittee agenda.
- 922 KAR 2:120 will be amended for compliance with Senate Bill 45 (Regular Session 2020). The Division of Child Care has obtained all required recommendations of advisory councils and state and national experts to implement the required standards and will begin drafting preliminary versions of the amendment.
- Key Metrics:
  - As of June 18, there were 17,124 families and 30,913 children receiving CCAP.
  - DCC has been processing stipends/bonuses to regulated child care providers and limited duration child care programs (LDCs) using the CARES Act funds. As of July 2, over $40 million have been distributed.

Protection and Permanency - Child Welfare



- Kentucky's Just in Time website continues to be a support for foster parents and caregivers. In May, 365 training certificates were issued to foster parents across the state. There were 3,261 total page views and 2,721 unique page views in May.
- The University of Kentucky College of Social Work (UK CoSW), in partnership with the DCBS, is pleased to announce the official launch of the Kentucky Kinship Information, Navigation, and Support (KY-KINS) program. KY-KINS is housed in the UK CoSW's Kentucky Kinship Resource Center and is aligned with the larger Kinship Navigator service array proffered by DCBS. In close concert with DCBS leadership, the Cumberland Service Region and the Salt River Trail Service Region have been chosen as the pilot sites. DCBS has been working with the UK CoSW to implement this program and has been in the development phase of curriculum and training for the past several months. KY-KINS will be launched in the two pilot regions, beginning with the planning phase in July 2020.
- DCBS had 40 youth register for the Earn and Learn program from across the state. The specialists conducted interviews the first week in June and selected 19 youth to participate. The youth have been referred to pre-employment specialists through Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS) to assist them through the enrollment and registration process at their local community college. Classes begin August 17, 2020.
- Fostering Success interviews will be conducted in July. The program will be on a smaller scale this year due to the pandemic, but youth in most regions will still have an opportunity to complete a 10-week internship. The program will start August 17, 2020 and will run for 10-weeks. Youth who excel in the program may have the opportunity to participate through the end of the year.
- 167 people registered for the first virtual Youth Empowerment Conference ever held in Kentucky. The conference took place June 19-20, 2020. Secretary Eric Friedlander was able to speak to the young people and provided some words of encouragement. Kentucky is one of the only states that did not cancel its youth conference because of the pandemic, but instead moved to a virtual platform.



The Transitional Services Branch collaborated with Kentucky Voices of the Commonwealth and Murray State University's Independent Living Services for the first-ever virtual Youth Empowerment Conference on June 19-20.

- SOP Chapter 7 - Safety, Prevention, and Aftercare Planning has been issued with the new safety plan and prevention plan tools in an offline TWIST version. A web-based training for the new tools will be available in the two weeks after the issuance of the new SOP.
- Safety model work continues with a timeline of full implementation of the intake assessment tool scheduled for spring of next year.

Protection and Permanency - Child Welfare

- Kentucky Kids Belong has developed COVID-19 protocols and procedures in order to safely begin filming again. There were 24 inquiries received during the month of May as a result of social media posts from the videos made by Kentucky Kids Belong. DCBS is reviewing the COVID19 protocols, procedures, and evaluating the best way to move forward with filming.
- Family Preservation Program staff statewide have begun training in the well-supported evidence-based services treatment program designed to avoid unnecessary placement of children and youth into foster care, group care, psychiatric hospitals, or juvenile justice facilities. Family Preservation Program staff with KVC (Salt River Trail, Northern Bluegrass, Southern Bluegrass, Northeastern, Eastern Mountain service regions) and Children's Home of Northern Kentucky (Northern Bluegrass) have also begun training in the well-supported evidence based practice, Functional Family Therapy (FFT). FFT is a family intervention program for youth experiencing dysfunction with disruptive, externalizing problems. These teams are the only existing certified teams offering FFT in the state of Kentucky. Use of both interventions will provide increased clinical capacity to Kentucky prevention providers, and will increase Title IV-E claiming for the state.
- As permitted under the Robert T. Stafford Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. §5121 et seq.), a request was submitted to the Children's Bureau for the provisional approval of foster homes during the COVID-19 pandemic. Provisional approval provides flexibility relating to the full licensing of foster family homes, with the understanding that states must complete as much of the licensure requirements as possible and complete the remaining requirements as soon as it is safe to do so.
- DCBS, in partnership with the Capacity Building Center for States, continues to move forward with the Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Redesign Project. The project's two teams, the CQI Self-Assessment Team and the CQI Academy Training Team, are making progress toward completion of activities that will inform the final recommendations to leadership, and the development of an implementation plan of a CQI framework with clear roles and expectations, feedback loops, stakeholder engagement, and capacity to monitor and evaluate the operation and efficacy of Kentucky's CQI framework.
  - To assess the agency's readiness and capacity to fully implement a comprehensive CQI Process, the CQI Self-Assessment team utilized the CQI Self-Assessment instrument to review practices, and to collect CQI-related data and information to inform recommendations. The findings of the CQI self-assessment are currently being analyzed, and the next step will be to present findings to executive leadership.
  - The CQI Academy training team continues to participate in the CQI Training Academy, an E-learning environment with seven modules designed to address the function and process of the CQI cycle in public child welfare. The curriculum is organized in seven units and provides foundational training in CQI, and the team is on schedule to complete the academy by the end of July.
  - In addition to the completion of the CQI Self-Assessment, the project team reached a key milestone with the development of Kentucky's CQI Mission statement that highlights the values on which the project is based: *"To design a data-informed, outcomes-driven, family-centered Continuous Quality Improvement process that is reflective of workforce and stakeholder inputs; creates a culture of learning for improvement and competence; and embeds an overarching quality assurance approach into the department's everyday work of providing services to families, children, and vulnerable adults."*

Protection and Permanency - Child Welfare

- Carmel Cline began a new role as the START Lead Family Mentor on June 8 and will provide coaching and ongoing support to family mentors and START teams across the state
- Quarterly virtual statewide START family mentor meeting was held on June 5.
  Bi-annual virtual statewide START provider meeting was held on June 19 and fidelity data was reviewed.
- START is currently being reviewed as a possible Evidence Based Practice (EBP) for Family First by the Prevention Services Clearinghouse administered by the U.S. Administration for Children and Families. The Children's Bureau has previously approved Kentucky's submission of an Independent Systematic Review of START rated as promising by the Clearinghouse standards as part of the Title IV-E Prevention Services Plan
- Contracts for further expansion of Family Preservation Program (FPP) contracts and expansion of the Kentucky Strengthening Ties and Empowering Parents (KSTEP) program have occurred, and additional families are receiving critical services. DCBS is finalizing a proposal for the Family First Transition Act grant funding to assist with expansion of EBP capacity as well as additional expansion of IV-E reimbursable prevention services. Expansions will increase FPP services by 32% and KSTEP services by 44%.
- A service provider invoicing portal will be deployed next month for prevention providers. This portal will streamline the invoicing and payment process as well as track vital data elements specific to EBPs.
- Consultants from Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago participated in virtual meetings this month assisting DCBS staff and private prevention providers with the development of a Family First Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) design. Clinical staff from our prevention programs, DPP prevention staff, data, evaluators, and other programmatic staff met to ensure a collaborative approach to EBP fidelity monitoring tools and a strong CQI design.
- DCBS continues to work closely with the Department for Medicaid Services towards a billing code to support the assessment and aftercare requirements of Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTP) implementation.
- Race, Community, and Child Welfare (RCCW) sites throughout the state had a meeting in May. All sites are trying to schedule a virtual meeting with their RCCW committee by the end of August.
- An amendment to 922 KAR 8:010 was filed on April 30, 2020. This administrative regulation was last amended in 2001 and is in need of many updates relating to rape crisis, mental health services, and statutory compliance.
- 922 KAR 1:490E was filed on May 12, 2020, in order to waive the fingerprint-based background check for foster parents and out of home caregivers temporarily during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- DCBS has drafted amendments to 922 KAR 1:330 and 922 KAR 1:450 to implement legislation that passed during Regular Session 2020. These amendments incorporate female genital mutilation in the child protective services program consistent with Senate Bill 72 and amend the public post-secondary tuition waiver program consistent with Senate Bill 115. These amendments are proposed for filing on July 15, 2020.
- Key Metrics:
  - Prevention services were provided to 941 families during the month of May.
  - Total number of children in out-of-home care is under 9,799. This is a decrease of 153 children from June 2020.
  - COVID-19 Testing of Youth in Care

Month	Tests Administered	Pending Test	Negative Test	Positive Test
*April 21, 2020	30	30	30	0
*May 18, 2020	133	1*	116	16
*June 22, 2020	197	32	163	6

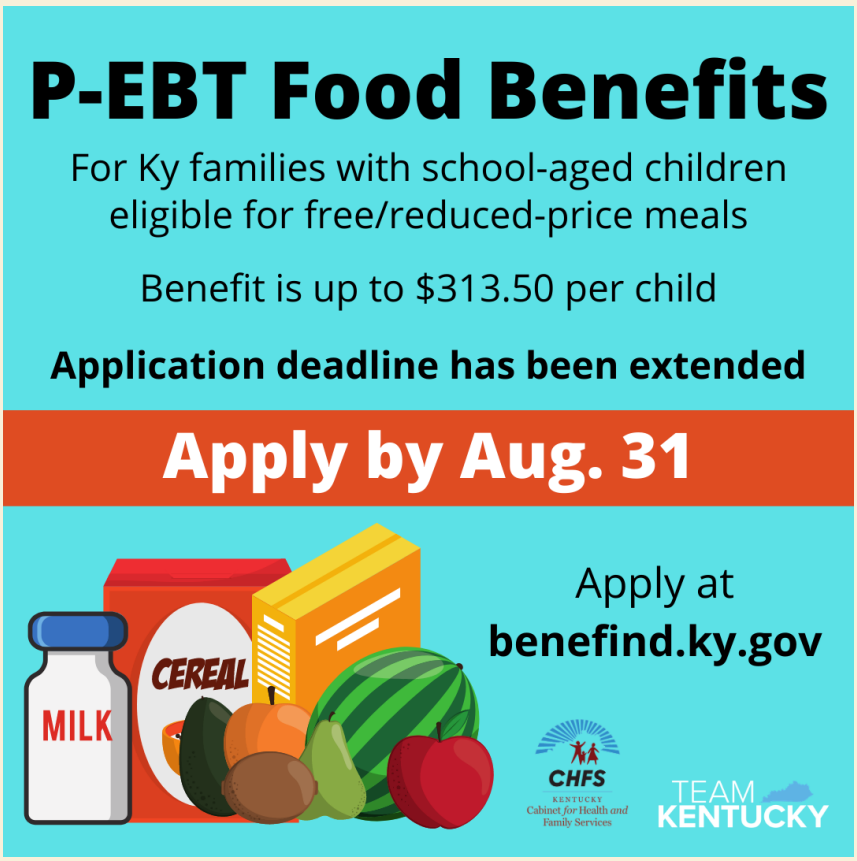
*** Represents an inconclusive test that will be repeated.**

The steep increase in the number of children tested for COVID-19 is the result of an outbreak among both staff and residents at Maryhurst residential campus in Louisville.

- In June, DSR saw a slow, steady increase in CPS/APS referrals to the agency. Despite the increase, we continue to see a decrease in past due investigations. We have decreased in past dues for 21 consecutive weeks. Current number of past dues: 3,865.

Family Support

- Call service hours continue to be extended to 5 p.m. as well as on Saturdays from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. The Division of Service Regions (DSR) is exploring and surveying staff on alternative work schedules in order to get these hours extended on a permanent basis.
- Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (PEBT) - The Division of Family Support (DFS) continues to work with the Kentucky Department of Education to issue Pandemic EBT benefits to children who lost access to school meals when schools closed due to COVID-19. The final application date has been changed to August 31 to allow families more time to apply. The following is an update on PEBT issuance as of 6/24:
  - Total children served: 510,595
  - Children approved whose parent or guardian needed to apply: 151,193
  - Children not yet served whose parent or guardian need to apply: 137,629 (this represents up to $43M)
  - Total issues so far: about $160M



  - Some SNAP operational adjustments related to COVID-19 will expire effective July 1, including the interview waiver and the postponed expedited interview waiver.
  - SNAP Emergency Allotments, which increase benefits to maximum levels for all households, will continue in July. Additional benefits for future months will be determined on a month-to-month basis.
  - Participants in the Kentucky Works Program are currently determined to have good cause for not being able to complete participation. This will continue as long as a statement of emergency due to COVID-19 is in effect.
  - DFS reviewed and approved the plans for Community Action Agencies' CARES funding. DFS will provide a guide to all DCBS divisions regarding the services available in each area for referral purposes.
  - DFS is engaging field staff - through surveys and focus groups - in gathering ideas designed to improve services to improve the experience and the outcomes of K-TAP participants. This same effort will also gather input from K-TAP consumers.
  - Emergency and ordinary amendments to 921 KAR 2:015 were filed on December 27, 2019, in order to pass on the federal cost of living adjustment (COLA) to the standard of need for individuals receiving Supplemental Security Income, effective January 2020. The amendment also contains language allowing the federal COLA to pass through Kentucky without further regulatory amendment. The ordinary amendment underwent its first legislative review in June and is anticipated to become effective in July.
  - 921 KAR 3:025&E were filed on April 15, 2020, in order to eliminate child support arrears as a component of the technical eligibility allowing disqualification from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).
  - 922 KAR 6:010&E were filed on May 21, 2020, in order to immediately utilize federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding to increase the eligibility income limit for programs and services provided through Community Services Block Grant funding.
  - 921 KAR 4:116&E were filed on May 28, 2020, in order to immediately utilize federal CARES Act funding to increase the eligibility income limit for services provided with Low Income Home Energy
  - Key Metrics as of June 22, 2020:
    - SNAP – 659,631 (increase from June 16 of 3,539 and an increase from March 1st of 148,046)
    - Medicaid – 1,411,551 (increase from June 16 of 3,138 and an increase from March 1st of 56,659)
    - PE Medicaid – 78,273 (increase from June 16 of 6,450)

Department Operations

- The Service Regions Administrators have begun meeting twice per month in order to stay abreast on general information and new policy and procedures relating to both Protection/Permanency and Family Support issues.
- The Safety Administrators within the Service Regions continue to keep inventory on the amount of protective equipment (masks, gloves, face shields, etc.) that the region has in order to ensure staff have the needed equipment to take all safety precautions needed while working in the office or with the public.

Service Region Administrators and leadership at the June 12 virtual SRA meeting.

- Although businesses are allowed to slowly open, most DSR staff continue to work from home. A telework survey was sent out in June to all staff (DSR, DPP, DCC, DFS, Central Office and the Commissioner's Office). The number of survey responses has been excellent. The survey closed on July 3, 2020 and we will share the results soon. The survey will help with planning as we move forward with our "new normal" of doing business.
- Eighteen of the 36 Public Child Welfare Certification Program (PCWCP) May 2020 graduates have been hired by DCBS. An additional four PCWCP students are on schedule to graduate in August 2020. Partner universities are currently recruiting for the fall 2020 semester and 36 applications have been received as of June 22, 2020.
- The Opioid Use Disorder/Substance Use Disorder (OUD/SUD) Attitudes and Beliefs survey for DCBS employees launched on June 1 and remained open until July 9. To date there have been over 1,270 recorded responses. Results from the survey will be compared to data gathered during the first administration of the survey conducted in 2019 as part of the Kentucky Opioid Response Effort (KORE) funded DCBS Training Project evaluation, as well as used to plan and implement future training events and professional development opportunities.

KORE
KENTUCKY OPIOID RESPONSE EFFORT

- Protection and Permanency Training:
  - 720 participants completed Responding to the Impact of Implicit Bias since May 1.
  - 30 are enrolled in the June Protection and Permanency Academy Training.
  - 16 supervisors are in the WKU Advanced Supervisory Series Training
  - Field Training Specialist pilot dates will be in August.
  - All three Universities, WKU, UofL and UK, have completed an entire academy with the 100% online format.
- Family Support Training has been training many new hires in the programmatic are of SNAP and Child Care. Since moving to an online version using SKYPE or Microsoft Teams, training is going well, and feedback has been positive to date. The next training program that will be transitioned to a SKYPE or Microsoft Teams based trainings will be the Medicaid Series.
- The following courses web-based courses are in development or are out for review and will be launched to participants thereafter: Child Care Assistance Program Enrollment and Copays, Worker Portal: System Matches, and SNAP Refresher: FS103.
- Employee mid-year interims must be completed in July. Supervisors have from July 1 – July 31 to complete the process. Interims should be a good representation of the employees work performance from January thru June. The interim should allow open dialogue between both supervisor and employee.

Department Operations

Interim Review steps are:

1. Self-Review-Employee - This is an optional step completed within 5 days of the employee receiving the task. If the employee does not complete the task within 5 days the task will automatically workflow to the evaluator.
2. Evaluator Review - This is a required step completed within 10 days of the evaluator receiving the task. The step will not progress until it is completed.
3. Next Line Supervisor Review - This is an optional step completed within 5 days of the next line receiving the task. If the next line supervisor does not complete the task within 5 days the task will automatically workflow to the evaluator.
4. Evaluator Discussion and Acknowledgment - This is a required step completed within 5 days of the evaluator receiving the task. This step will not progress until the task is completed. During this step, the evaluator shall conduct the required meeting with the employee to discuss performance.
5. Employee Acknowledgment - This is a required step completed within 5 days of the employee receiving the task. The Mid-Year Interim task will not be complete until this step is completed. Supervisors must ensure this step is completed.

- Employees should launch in Google Chrome for online trainings in MyPurpose. The pop-up blocker should be disabled and the Flash player should be enabled.
- The Division of Child Care, Division of Regulated Child Care (OIG), and CHFS Secretary Friedlander presented on the reopening of Kentucky child care centers to the Program Review and Investigations Committee on June 11, 2020.
- DFS presented on the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) and its associated preliminary FFY 2021 state plan to the Interim Joint Committee on Natural Resources and Energy on July 9, 2020.
- DCBS is preparing “short form” summaries of legislative proposals the department needs to pursue in Regular Session 2021.
- Key Metrics:
  - For the month of May, DCBS hired 72 people and had 34 separations and seven retirements.
  - As of June 25, DCBS has submitted the following personnel actions for the month of June: 59 appoint/rehire/reinstate/transfer in, 52 separations, and 21 retirements.

DFS Director Jason Dunn presented to the IJC on Natural Resources and Energy about LIHEAP on July 9.

Self-Care Corner

Most of us are working from home during this coronavirus emergency. When our living space becomes our office, we need to create boundaries and have a setup that’s good for productivity but also supports our well-being. Try these tips.

Make space for work only. Separate your work place from areas where you relax or have family time. This can be hard if you have limited space or if several family members need room for work or school. Get creative by rearranging and repurposing furniture.

Dress for work. Leave the pajamas for bedtime. Dressing down actually can hurt productivity. You don’t have to wear corporate attire, but dress like you might see a customer. Changing into more comfy clothes later is also a good way to mark the end of your workday.

Set the scene. Add touches to your workspace that make it feel more like your office – a place for often-referenced files, a plant, photos and a calendar.

Set limits. Even if you’re now always “at work,” you shouldn’t always be working. Resist the urge to check email or sit at your work station in "off" hours. Embrace the time meant for yourself.

Take real breaks. Step away from your desk and have a meal. Take time to stretch, take a walk or call a friend. It’s easy some days to fill up with virtual meetings. You won’t be able to participate meaningfully if you’re not fueled up and clear-headed.