

# Position Statement

For 2023 Session

## Paperwork Reduction Modernization

### Proposal

**Issue:** The amount of paperwork in CPS cases and time dedicated to using the antiquated technology systems within all human services system hinders the necessary relationship-based work to promote best outcomes for individuals and families. Antiquated technology and overburdensome paperwork also restrict our ability to retain a dedicated and committed workforce, as they choose to exit to other fields that have the necessary resources to support quality work. As an example, the recent Office of the Legislative Authority (OLA) report on child protection indicated a barrier for families in child protection matters is the lengthy and often complicated out of home placement plan. The recommendation was to provide a shortened, easy to understand plan for families. This plan is developed by DHS and required to be used for all out of home placements where the human services agency has placement authority.

**Implementation Strategy:** DHS should subtract duplicative data entry in all HS technology systems. Streamline and promote technology that enhances (not hinders) work with individuals and households, and that also embraces “unsiloed” work/no wrong door approach in working with multigenerational families. Specific reports such as the out of home placement plan for children should be reviewed and non-statutory required information reduced, and requirements which are required by state statute only reviewed for potential legislative changes in the 2024 legislative session.

### Systemic Priority Alignment (highlight all that apply and explain why)

- Equity
- Integrated Services
- Fiscal Framework

From the GARE Toolkit (See [www.racialequityalliance.org](http://www.racialequityalliance.org)): What are the racial equity impacts of this particular decision? Who will benefit from or be burdened by it? Are there strategies to mitigate unintended consequences?

#### Comments:

State systems which are antiquated and burdensome hinder positive outcomes for our workforce and for the households we serve. Improving our systems will help promote best outcomes for individuals and multi-generational households who walk through our human services doors. We can use technology to our advantage to help lift up those individuals and whole groups of people who have historically been underserved. The systems include mandated documents which meet statutory requirements but are often complex, long and difficult for families to understand. This is especially true for individuals who have English as a second language or have other barriers to reading and comprehension of the document language, providing an inequitable opportunity for success in meeting the plan expectations.

Improving technology and creating systems that work together will better serve all households. Having a household repeat “their story” more than once is not only insensitive, but inputting “their story” multiple times into multiple non-integrated human services systems is inefficient and delays services and programming that may be helpful. Workers are weighed down by unnecessary paperwork and slow, inefficient systems, leaving less time for building healthy, helping relationships with our clients.

### Relevant Committee (highlight all that apply and explain why)

- Adult Services
- Behavioral Health
- Children's Services
- Equity
- Healthcare
- Modernization
- Policy
- Self-Sufficiency

**Why:** Although this position originated with a CPS lens, subtracting duplicative data and mainstreaming and reducing paperwork and other data entry requirements pertain to all of the above committees. Human services systems, in an effort to truly serve clients well, need to be modernized. Reviewing data entry and paperwork requirements will likely include reviewing policies to ensure that we are meeting all federal requirements, but may lead DHS to review state policies and potentially advocating for modifying state law to incorporate suggested changes.

### **Rationale/Background:**

Workers are spending way too much time on paperwork and data entry into various human services technology systems. As the workforce shortage continues, human services will continue to lose dedicated and committed employees out of frustration with working with antiquated systems and entering the same information into multiple places in our systems. As we lose time with our clients due to voluminous paperwork and old technology, our workforce will leave and enter other fields where they are able to assist others in a more efficient manner. By reducing paperwork and enhancing technology, workers will be able to spend more time with their clients, which leads to stronger relationship-based work. A stronger worker-client relationship promotes better outcomes for those interfacing with our human services systems. DHS should review and streamline all data entry requirements and eliminate data entry points and paperwork (like the OHPP) to subtract unnecessary information. As noted in the OLA report, the lengthy out of home placement plan is unhelpful and confusing to the exact individuals it's intended for- caregivers seeking to be reunified with their children. DHS should also review all non-federally required data entry reporting and seek out legislative authority to remove these requirements.



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