

## DSS Policy and Procedure Guide

Division 03: Child Welfare

Chapter 01: Director's Policies

### Item 014: Caseload Guidelines

Suggested changes send to: [DSS PSOA Mailbox](#)

Issued: **October 24, 2014**

References: County of Fresno Personnel Rule 12, Fresno County Salary Resolution, Personnel Rules, and Memorandums of Understanding. Nothing in this Policy and Procedure Guide shall supersede the above items.

Revisions in Red

Replaces Issue: **March 4, 2011**

### Preamble

Child Welfare Policy and Procedure Guides are meant to be used as tools to relay best practice and staff expectations. It is understood that specific case scenarios may not always align themselves with the stated practices and that at all times what is of paramount importance is the Safety and Well-being of the children we are charged to protect.

### Policy

Social Worker (SW) caseloads will be assigned according to suggested Caseload guidelines.

### Purpose

To promote excellence in social work practice and support SWs in achieving professional success.

### Definitions

**Caseload Guidelines** – The ideal number of active children/referrals assigned to a SW.

**New SW** – A newly hired SW1.

### Responsibilities

Supervisors are responsible for assigning cases within the suggested caseload guidelines.

Program Managers (PM) are responsible for monitoring the application of the caseload guidelines for each employee assigned to their unit.

PMs are responsible to inform Administration of any workload management concerns.

**Procedure**

SWI and SWII Caseload Assignments

Caseload assignments will be gradually increased in accordance with the adopted caseload guidelines during the first year of employment.

Efforts will be made to ensure that caseload guidelines for SWIs and SWIIs will not be exceeded, unless SWIII and Social Work Practitioner (SWP) ranges have first been exhausted.

SWIII and SWP Caseload Assignments

A caseload assignment range is suggested for SWIII and SWP. Caseload assignments are subject to department need. In the event of caseload management concerns, the PM shall advise Administration.

New SW Training Plan – Caseload Management

New SW caseload assignments will be gradually increased based on work performance and in accordance with suggested guidelines, with a goal to successful management of a SWII caseload at 9-12 months of employment.

	SWI	SWI	SWI	SWI
	0 to 3 months	3 to 6 months	6 to 9 months	9 to 12 months
<b>Permanency Planning</b>	0 to 10 Children	10 to 20 Children	20 to 25 Children	25 Children
<b>Family Reunification</b>	0 to 6 Children	6 to 15 Children	15 to 20 Children	20 Children
<b>Voluntary Family Maintenance</b>	0 to 10 Children	10 to 15 Children	15 to 20 Children	25 Children

	SWP	SWP	SWP	SWP
	0 to 3 months	3 to 6 months	6 to 9 months	9 to 12 months
<b>Adoptions/ Assessments</b>	0 to 10 Children	10 to 20 Children	20 to 30 Children	30 Children

SW caseload assignments within the following program areas are recommended at:

**Emergency Response**

A combination of Crisis and Non-crisis referrals will be assigned. SWs will be on rotation and respond to referrals proportionate to the number of referrals received and staff available. SWs new to the Emergency Response task area will be trained and be assigned new referrals on a gradual basis until they are functioning within the recommended range. SWI staff who are new to the Department of Social Services (DSS) should expect to be on full rotation no later than six months. All other classifications should be on full rotation after three months. This will be adjusted based on individual needs and the impact of ongoing training schedules.

**Targeted Ranges:**

SWI.....10-13 referrals per month  
SWII.....13-16 referrals per month  
SWIII/SWP.....16-20+ referrals per month

**Voluntary Family Maintenance**

SWII.....25-27 children per month (cap)  
SWIII.....27-30 children per month (range)  
SWP... 30+ children per month (range)

**Family Reunification**

SWII.....20-22 children (cap)  
SWIII.....22-25 children (range)  
SWP... 25-28+ children (range)

**Permanency Planning**

SWII.....25-28 youth (cap)  
SWIII.....28-32 youth (range)  
SWP... 32-34+ youth (range)

**Adoptions/Assessment**

SWIII/SWP .....30 children (range)

The **Child Welfare Deputy** Director reserves the right to adjust caseload **guidelines** and workload distribution at any time based on budget reasons and staffing resources.