

House Bill 1 Implementation

One Year Later

Cletus Poat, Vice Chair, Citizen Foster Care Review Board
Kelly Stephens, Governmental Affairs Liaison, AOC

Child Welfare Oversight and Oversight Committee
August 19, 2019

HOUSE BILL 1

Administrative Office of the Courts Update

Kelly Stephens
AOC Governmental Affairs Liaison



HOUSE BILL 1 EDUCATION

WEBINARS

- Judge webinar (internal)
- Attorney webinar posted on courts.ky.gov

JUDICIAL COLLEGES

- Circuit/Family and District Court Judges sessions

FAMILY LAW CONFERENCE

- For Family Court Judges and Staff

GAL/CAC TRAINING CURRICULUM

- House Bill 1 changes have been integrated into Guardian ad Litem/Court Appointed Counsel training curriculum and materials

KENTUCKY LAW UPDATES

- 2018 Updates included House Bill 1 curriculum



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FAMILY COURT RULES

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- Includes House Bill 1 provisions The amendments are open to public comment through July 31st

COURT FORMS

- New forms effective July 14, 2018
- Included all applicable changes from House Bill 1

APPELLATE COURT RULES

- Expedited briefing and scheduling rules for involuntary termination of parental rights cases



PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENTS

CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

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REPORTING

- Developing and refining new reports for judges to assist with caseload management and tracking

PROCESS FLOWS

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JUDICIAL DATA REPORTS

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- Shows past and future events, aids ability to track and manage cases

Administrative Office of the Courts
Pending Dependency, Neglect, Child Abuse and Adoption/Termination Cases

[Redacted]

District Court - Original Pending

Case #	Case Title	Filing Date
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	06/07/2019

SCHEDULED EVENTS:

Sched Date	Scheduled Type	JudgeName
06/17/2019	TEMPORARY REMOVAL HEARING	[Redacted]
07/25/2019	ADJUDICATION HEARING	[Redacted]

DOCUMENTS FILED:

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Case #	Case Title	Filing Date
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SCHEDULED EVENTS:

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05/30/2019	OTHER HEARING	[Redacted]

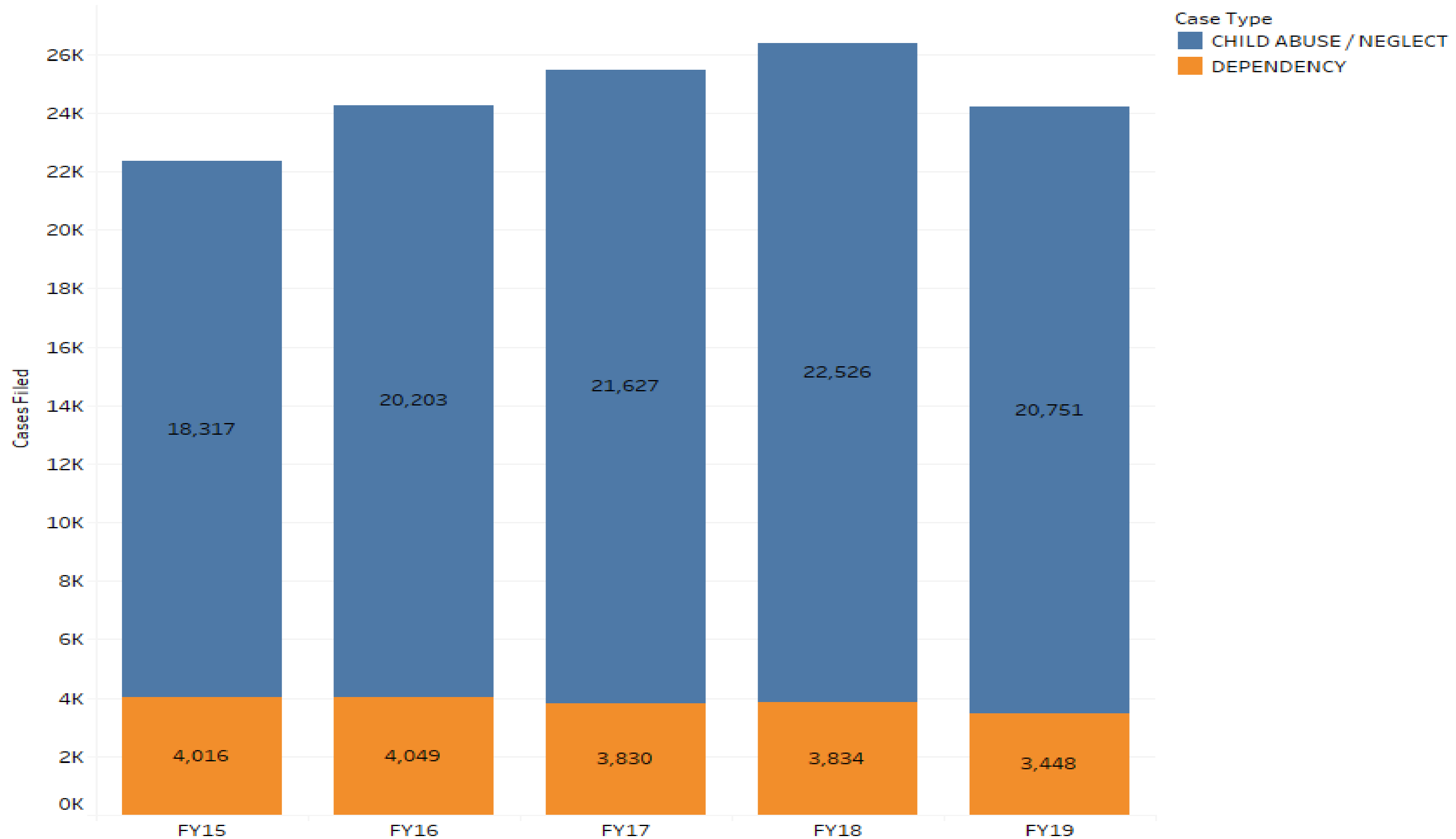
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05/22/2019 PETITION-JUVENILE



Dependency, Neglect and Abuse Cases Filed FY 2015 - 2019 Statewide

	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19
CHILD ABUSE / NEGLECT	18,317	20,203	21,627	22,526	20,751
DEPENDENCY	4,016	4,049	3,830	3,834	3,448
Grand Total	22,333	24,252	25,457	26,360	24,199



*Data is provided from the CourtNet Database



HOUSE BILL 1

Citizen Foster Care Review Board Update

Cletus Poat
State Board Vice Chair
Citizens Foster Care Review Board



CFCRB ACTION AREAS

TRAINING

- Volunteers trained at every Regional Training

COMMUNITY FORUMS

- Fall and spring forums conducted in each district
- Open to all

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Input from Forums have led to suggested changes to law and process



CFCRB COMMUNITY FORUMS

FALL 2018 FORUMS

- August 24, 2018 – Elizabethtown (Hardin)
- September 21, 2018 – Salyersville (Magoffin)
- September 25, 2018 – Lexington (Fayette)
- September 28, 2018 – Madisonville (Hopkins)
- October 19, 2018 – Florence (Boone)
- October 26, 2018 – Somerset (Pulaski)
- October 29, 2018 – Louisville (Jefferson)

SPRING 2019 FORUMS

- March 28, 2019 – Somerset (Pulaski)
- March 30, 2019 – Union (Boone)
- April 8, 2019 – Owensboro (Davies)
- April 9, 2019 – Madisonville (Hopkins)
- April 15, 2019 – Frankfort (Franklin)
- April 18, 2019 – Louisville (Jefferson)



THEMES FROM COMMUNITY FORUMS

- *Frustration with lack of communication and training*
- *Frustration with agency process and court process*
- *Frustration with available and accessible support/services*



Communication and Training

- **Children, parents, and caregivers need timely, complete, and accurate information about:**
 - Agency and court process in general
 - Status, progress, and reasonable expected outcome of the case
 - Availability, necessity, and benefit of services and resources
- **Also need help facilitating communication between each other**



Communication and Training

- **Foster parents reported a lack of information about:**
 - Available Independent Living Skills services
 - Educational challenges and terminology (leveling)
 - Court dates, and whether the child should be present
 - Child's needs
 - Visitation schedules and changes
 - Trauma, its impact on the child, and strategies to help child
 - Support services/groups
 - Financial resources



Communication and Training/Specific Training Needs

- **For Foster Parents:**

- Agency and court process
- Accessing court and the roles of parties, attorneys, professionals
- Accessing educational and monetary resources for children
- Accessing support for foster parents
- Role of foster parents

- **For CASA Volunteers:**

- Specialized training for medically fragile children



Agency/Court Process Concerns

- Youth are frustrated when placed outside their home counties
- If allegations are unsubstantiated, children should be returned
- There should be measures in place to prevent additional trauma from happening while child is in state's custody
- Relatives should be identified as soon as possible
- Parent's case plans are overwhelming (should be incremental)
- Lack of Family Court in each county



Agency/Court Process Concerns

- Foster parents should be drug tested
- Foster parents should be the “right fit” for the child, not vice versa
- Foster parents should advocate for child’s return instead of working against the biological parent
- Out-of-state placements take too long (red tape and lack of communication)
- Parties, agencies, and attorneys should participate in Interested Party Reviews
- Children’s attorneys should regularly communicate with the child



Agency/Court Process Concerns

- Termination of parental rights (TPR) taking too long
- Adoption taking too long
- Lack of voice in process
- Too many reunifications
- Children removed for maltreatment in foster home
- Inability to make medical and educational decisions for child
- Inability to make day-to-day decisions (sports, cell phone, sleepovers, etc.)
- Delays in receiving contracts and reimbursements



Needed Services/Support

- Preventative services for biological families to prevent unnecessary removals
- Reunification services for parents who are incarcerated short-term
- Transportation services for parents to complete plan
- Interpreter services
- Immediate trauma-informed therapy for children upon removal
- Counseling for children on how to manage uncomfortable social situations



Needed Services/Support

- Mentors/Peer-Support for every stakeholder
 - Life coach for children
 - Parent aide or peer-support for parents and care-givers
- Post-adoption services for children
 - Children sometimes lose their provider/services (Better off if committed)
- Quicker assessments or more assessors
 - Assessments ordered for mental health, substance abuse, parenting, etc.; sometimes take months for report
- Financial support for relatives and fictive kin



Current CFCRB Legislative Recommendations

- Statewide Expansion of Family Courts to each Judicial Circuit

- The CFCRB has historically regarded the statewide expansion of Family Court as a high priority due to improved outcomes for families and children who have access to expanded services provided by Family Court. To further this cause, the CFCRB would support a future judicial redistricting plan that brings Family Court to every county in the Commonwealth.

- Increase funding for DCBS that is dedicated to securing and maintaining sufficient local staff to work caseloads

- Amend KRS 620.190(e) to allow non-DCBS employees of CHFS to serve on local boards. Suggested language:

- (e) Employees of the ~~cabinet~~ Department for Community Based Services shall be prohibited from serving on the local citizen foster care review board



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Rachel Bingham
Executive Officer
Department for Family &
Juvenile Services



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For any further questions, comments, or concerns, please contact:

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