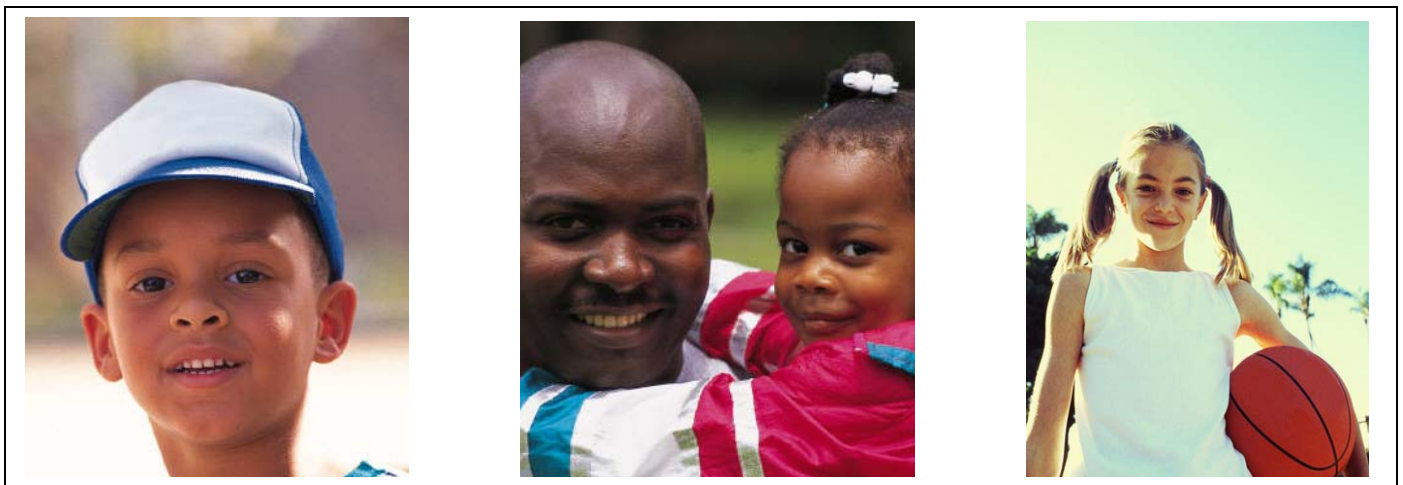


# What Counts?

## A Report on Workforce Planning Data Used by the Nation's Top Ten Human Service Agencies



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# Executive Summary

The Annie E. Casey Foundation commissioned CPS Human Resource Services to conduct a survey of the nation's ten largest public children's service agencies to determine the availability and use of human resources data for workforce planning. CPS staff conducted telephone interviews between mid-September and mid-December 2003 with the Human Resources (HR) Directors (or their designees) of the ten agencies. The agencies who participated in the survey requested that their information only be shared in an aggregate format.

## **Major Findings**

- I. HR Managers are generally dissatisfied with the data systems on which they must rely.** Most of the data that HR managers rely on for workforce planning is drawn from a centralized "personnel/payroll" data base that is under the control of a third party, such as the jurisdiction's merit system, the auditor's office, and/or the budget office and their data collection objectives often do not align with those of the agencies. Most of the respondents expressed some degree of dissatisfaction with the usefulness, accuracy, thoroughness, and "user friendliness" of the data system.
- II. Even among the ten largest Human Services jurisdictions, none enjoy the benefit of having workforce planning data readily available in all of the key workforce planning areas.** Although the availability of data and the resources to do effective workforce planning varies from one jurisdiction to another, none of them have the ability to obtain, monitor, and analyze data to the extent one would expect of a human resources operation in a large complex organization.
- III. Some of the most useful HR data to the Human Service Agency is the least available.** Basic demographic data and data on employee compensation is the most readily available and easiest to use to create different report formats, because agencies already compile it for EEO reporting and budget preparation. However, critical information about employee turnover, applicant tracking, vacancy control, and performance management is often difficult for the human service agency to obtain.
- IV. HR data systems tend to collect that which is required by a higher level regulatory authority.** All ten agencies have data systems that can monitor in considerable detail information about caseload size, error rates, and other productivity measures required by the Federal government, legislature, or other oversight bodies. Much of the needed HR data are not measured unless a regulatory body requires it. For example at least two of the jurisdictions that measure employee turnover do so because it is required by state law or legislative mandate.

- V. HR offices often lack the technical expertise and /or the IT unit support to collect and monitor needed data.** Half of the agencies indicated that a major barrier to effective workforce planning is not having the expertise within HR to create the software systems to bring together needed data from the varied sources (finance, budget, accounting, etc.). Unfortunately, assistance from the agency's IT division is often difficult to obtain because of competing priorities for scarce IT resources.
- VI. HR offices are so overwhelmed with the day to day operational challenges that they do not have the time to devote to meaningful workforce planning.** Seven of the HR offices reported that they did not have the luxury of devoting enough staff resources to data reporting and analysis to engage in meaningful workforce planning. Those few agencies that believed that they were doing a good job in workforce planning had staff dedicated to this function.

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# Detailed Analysis and Summary

## *Scope of Work*

Information about the human service work force is limited. The data needed to make sound workforce planning decisions is often unavailable, or at best difficult to obtain. The purpose of this study was to survey the nation's ten largest Children's Services agencies to determine the availability and usefulness of human resources data for workforce planning, and to determine what barriers, if any, impede effective workforce planning. The results of the ten-agency survey enhance understanding about the data human service agencies collect and how they collect it. The CPS methodology included:

- Designing a survey instrument to obtain information regarding the availability of data on the following HR categories:
  - Demographics
  - Recruitment
  - Skill Sets
  - Compensation
  - Performance Management
  - Workforce Planning
  - Caseload/Workload
  - Job Satisfaction
  - Turnover
  
- Administering the telephone survey. Before administering the telephone survey, CPS staff tested it on two jurisdictions. In conducting the survey, CPS interviewed Human Resource Directors, Human Resource Managers and Analysts.
  
- Writing the final report

## *Introduction and Methodology*

The purpose of this study was to survey the nation's ten largest Children's Services agencies to determine the availability and usefulness of human resources data for workforce planning, and to determine what barriers, if any, impede effective workforce planning.

Public sector human services program delivery varies by state. In some, virtually all programs are administered by a single state agency. In other states the programs may be supervised by a single agency, but administered at the county or city level. In yet other states, the programs may be administered by a number of different and independent state and local agencies.

A telephone interview, using an interview guide, was conducted with the Human Resources Director, or his/her designee, in each of the agencies.

Because of their hectic schedules, the Human Resources Directors as a group were difficult to contact. In most instances, there were several attempts before the interview could be completed. In five of the agencies, the HR Director personally participated in the interview. Because of time constraints and competing priorities, the HR Directors in four of the agencies delegated that responsibility to a staff member. In the tenth agency, the HR Director was so new to the position it was believed that interviewing a staff person with more experience in the agency would be more beneficial. Interviewees were assured that the information they provided would be handled confidentially and shared only with those directly involved in the project within the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Anything shared beyond that group would be provided in a summary format unless the responding agencies were asked and agreed to have specific information in this report. The attached appendices provide more details about the interview process and specific information gathered from each agency:

- **Appendix A** is a discussion of the key workforce planning data elements.
- **Appendix B** is a copy of the Interview Questionnaire that the interviewer used as a guide.

### ***Agency Profile***

Child welfare services are administered at the state level in eight of the ten largest jurisdictions. In two jurisdictions, the programs are state-supervised but locally administered.

The ten agencies range in size from 3,600 employees to more than 21,000. The size disparity is attributable to the fact that four of the agencies administer only the child welfare programs, while the other six agencies administer a range of other human service programs such as public assistance, mental health, and developmental disabilities.

Each jurisdiction has a centralized civil service (merit system) agency in another department of the executive branch that provides some degree of oversight to the human services agency. However, the degree of control over the human resources management function varied considerably. Five of the human services agencies reported having considerable autonomy over their internal human resources operation, with the centralized merit system having broad regulatory authority and offering guidance and consultation. Two of the agencies reported their human resources functions being highly regulated by a centralized merit system that provided prescriptive rules, regulations, and procedures, including centralized applicant screening and determining qualifications for employment. The remaining three agencies fell somewhere in the middle, with oversight and monitoring by the central merit system, but significant autonomy in certain human resources functions such as recruitment and selection.

## ***Findings and Analysis***

### **I. HR Managers are generally dissatisfied with the data systems on which they must rely.**

Because all of the human services organizations contacted were a department or agency of a larger city, county, or state governmental entity, they all entered employment data about their workforce into a centralized “personnel/payroll” data base. All of them were able to download or manipulate the data to run reports or use it for workforce planning. During the interview, most respondents expressed some degree of dissatisfaction with the centralized data system. Some of the concerns expressed included:

- Certain important data elements not being tracked (e.g., educational level, position control data, vacancy information and specific program assignments within a broad classification, such as foster care or protective services).
- The inability to track historic information because the data system was designed to capture only current pay period information.
- “Glitches” in the system causing the data to be unreliable.
- The data system not being “user friendly,” making it difficult to design and run reports.
- Tracked data not being specific enough (i.e., promotions, demotions, transfers to other classifications and transfers to other locations all being coded as “job changes;” or resignations, retirements, and employee deaths all being coded as “terminations”).

Three agencies cited the absence of needed data, and/or the reliability of the data as a barrier to effective workforce planning. Respondents mentioned they could not get historical data, that coding of data is too general so that important information is lost, and that the central payroll/personnel system does not track certain information important to the agencies. Data are also sometimes lost, or at least very difficult to retrieve, when an agency updates its payroll/personnel system to new software. Only one of the agencies believed it had significant enough control over the design of the data system to permit it to determine the type and format of data collected.

### **II. Even among the ten largest Human Service jurisdictions, none enjoy the benefit of having workforce planning data readily available in all of the key workforce planning areas.**

The seven key workforce planning data elements identified by CPS for purposes of this survey are as follows:

- **Demographics:** Basic age, race, gender, and tenure (seniority) information about the workforce.

- **Recruitment and Selection:** Information about job applicants, applicant pools, and vacancies.
- **Skill Sets:** Information about employee’s educational attainment, language skills, agency training, and other specialized skills.
- **Compensation:** Information about pay rates, pay steps, merit pay, and premiums.
- **Performance Management:** Information about employee performance evaluations and disciplinary action.
- **Turnover:** Information about employee turnover and attrition.
- **Job Satisfaction:** Information obtained from employee satisfaction surveys and exit surveys/interviews.

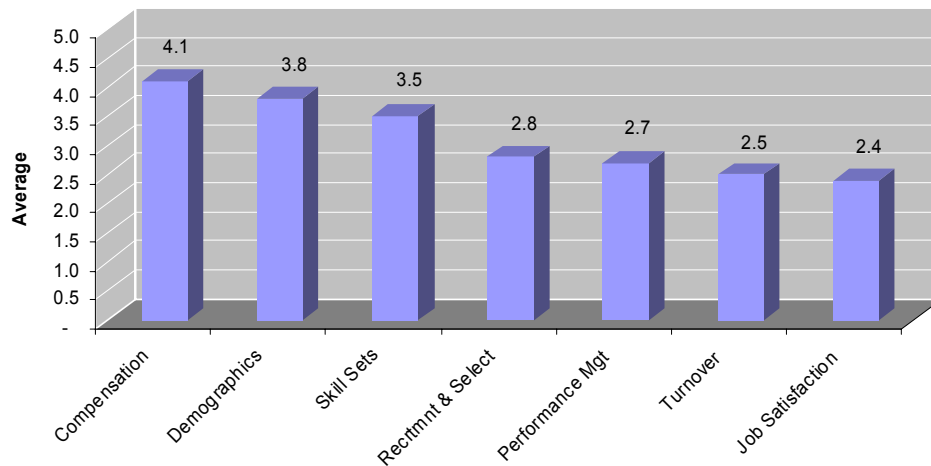
We summarized the availability of each of the workforce planning data elements for each jurisdiction interviewed and assigned a numerical score to each of the data elements using a Likert Scale ranging from 1 (Data is Unavailable) to 5 (All is readily available and detailed reports can be created easily).

Of the seven workforce planning data elements collected for each of the ten agencies, the availability of data elements ranged from 2.6 – 3.9. The average score was 3.1. Although data is more readily available in some agencies than others, none of the organizations achieved a score of 4 or higher.

### **III. Some of the most useful HR data to the Human Services Agency is the least available.**

Chart 1 (page 7) depicts the availability of Workforce Planning Data by key Workforce Planning Data Elements. Although all of the data elements are important for workforce monitoring and planning purposes, some of the most important data elements are difficult, if not impossible, for most of the HR offices to obtain. Compensation data and demographic information are readily available in most of the jurisdictions. On the other hand, information on turnover, applicant tracking, vacancy control, job satisfaction and performance management are more difficult to obtain.



**Chart 1: Average Availability of Workforce Planning Data by Type**

The seven key workforce planning data elements identified by CPS for purposes of this survey are as follows:

**Compensation:** Wage and salary data is generally available and can be analyzed in a variety of formats by most of the agencies. But compensation data is far from perfect in some of the agencies. The inability to obtain compensation data for social workers in specific program assignments is a problem in four jurisdictions. A few agencies also expressed frustration because their data system is unable to provide historic salary information.

**Demographics:** Agencies report that demographic data is readily available and can be easily formatted into a variety of useful reports. Such reports are usually used for EEO reporting and tracking purposes, but are also used by some agencies for identifying specific recruitment needs or for projecting retirement eligibility. The major shortcoming cited by most of the agencies is the inability to obtain information in the detail necessary to identify the demographic characteristics of employees within specialized programs of a major classification.

**Skill Sets:** With the exception of one agency, all are able to obtain fairly good information about the educational attainment of their workforce. The common shortcoming is the inability to identify educational attainment, (or other skill set information) for employees within specific program assignments within a classification. Eight of the jurisdictions have automated tracking systems to track agency provided training.

**Recruitment and Selection:** In three of the ten agencies, the centralized merit system recruits and screens most of the candidates for employment. Of those who handle these

responsibilities, six have applicant tracking systems which range from basic to sophisticated. Eight are able to identify the number of current vacancies, but only five can track the length of time it takes to fill a specific position. Of those five none are able to track average length of time it takes to fill positions.

**Performance Management:** Only six of the agencies are able to monitor the completion of performance evaluations on their employees. All of those are able to run reports showing the number of employees achieving a specific performance level, but only one agency is able to monitor the details of performance by competency level or the achievement of specific objectives. All of the agencies are able to track the more serious forms of disciplinary action (i.e., discharge, suspension, and demotion).

**Turnover Data:** One of the major problems facing most human services agencies is that of employee turnover, particularly among children's services workers.

Eight of the ten agencies interviewed acknowledged that turnover among child welfare workers is a serious issue, but few of them actually produce and/or monitor turnover data. None of them appear to make a concerted effort to rely on data to make workforce planning decisions or other organizational or programmatic changes to address the turnover problem.

- Only three agencies produce regular turnover reports, but the absence of detail in the reports may make the process of questionable usefulness.
- Although four agencies produce attrition reports, most of them do not use the data to proactively monitor turnover or to otherwise address the problem
- Existing definitions of turnover, particularly in child welfare, mask the movement of employees from the more difficult jobs to the less challenging jobs within the agency.
- None of the agencies distinguishes between problematic and acceptable turnover.
- None of the agencies monitor the cost of turnover, and only a few have ever attempted to place a dollar cost on turnover.
- Meaningful turnover reports require a level of detail which most organizations are not able to obtain. In most of the agencies, only one or two classifications are used to cover the broad range of programmatic assignments a child welfare worker might have, and many of the data systems are only capable of tracking employees by classification rather than program assignment. It is likely that turnover is greater among those doing protective services investigations than among those doing adoptions, but if the same classification title is used for both functions, the agency is unable to measure the different turnover rates.

**Job Satisfaction:** Most of the agencies have done little in the way of attempting to measure employee satisfaction. Only four have administered attitude surveys in the past, and those experiences have been recent. Most of the agencies conduct either exit surveys or exit interviews with departing employees, but all but one of them acknowledge the

response rate to be very low. Information collected from employee attitude surveys and exit interviews/surveys should provide useful information to improve morale and reduce turnover. Respondents mentioned that shortcomings in this area are due to lack of agency priority and resources rather than data system deficiencies.

#### **IV. HR data systems tend to collect that which is required by a higher level regulatory body.**

All but one of the survey respondents rely on data housed in a centralized system outside their sphere of control. Many of those data systems are designed, at least in part, to provide and monitor data required by the Federal Government or state and local legislative bodies. Examples include demographic data required for EEO reporting purposes and compensation data required for legislative and budget office purposes.

Two of the three jurisdictions that measure employee turnover reported that they do so because it is required by state law or legislative mandate.

All of the agencies reported having sophisticated reporting capability, usually within the field operations or program offices, to monitor workload and productivity. This performance data is normally required by the Federal Government as part of the monitoring it does of state and local program performance. Three HR offices stated that they do not believe that the agency leadership considers workforce planning to be a priority. Furthermore the agency leadership, and/or executive team, did not use data provided to them (e.g., exit survey results, and turnover data) to address the issues.

#### **V. HR Offices often lack the technical expertise and /or IT unit support to collect and monitor needed data.**

Five agencies stated that they lack expertise within HR and are unable to receive priority attention from the IT organization to properly design software systems necessary to provide needed information. Tracking systems to monitor grievances, leaves of absence, workers compensation claims, turnover, unusual incidents, and the like are not usually features of the “jurisdiction wide” payroll/personnel data base, and must be designed within the agency. Another problem is that data needed by HR is often found in independent software systems (payroll/personnel, accounting, budget, etc.) and HR lacks the expertise to develop software to integrate data from the various systems

Three agencies cited problems with “software” and “technology” as barriers to effective workforce planning. They were concerned that the software is difficult to learn and use. Others believe that their software is outdated.

**VI. HR offices are so overwhelmed with the day to day operational challenges that they do not have the time to devote to meaningful workforce planning.**

Five agencies believe that their Human Resource Office does not have the staff time to design and run reports, or to analyze the data necessary for effective workforce planning. Most do not have analysts on the HR staff who are primarily responsible for data tracking and analysis or workforce planning.

The three agencies that appeared to be generally satisfied with their data systems and workforce planning efforts considered the reliance on data in decision making to be a priority. They also employed analysts within the Human Resource offices who monitored and analyzed the data.

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# **Appendix A: Discussion of Key Workforce Planning Data Elements**

## ***Demographic Information***

Each of the ten agencies indicated that demographic information is readily available, and can be easily formatted into reports based on classification or work location. For example, all respondents stated that it is easy to run reports showing the race, age, gender and tenure breakdowns of all employees in a specific classification title located at a specific office location. All agencies use such reports for EEO tracking and reporting purposes. Three of the agencies specifically mentioned that the data are used to identify specific recruitment needs. Two of the organizations said that they use demographic data for retirement projections and succession planning.

A significant problem identified by seven of the respondents is the difficulty, if not the impossibility of obtaining demographic information about employees assigned to specific children's services programs such as protective services, foster care, prevention, juvenile justice, or adoption (because turnover in certain child welfare programs is greater than in others, it is important to understand the demographic differences of employees in the various programs as a consideration in attempting to address the turnover problem). The reason it is difficult to determine the demographic characteristics of employees in the specific program assignments is because employees in multiple programs are included in a single classification. In these seven agencies, demographic data can be sorted by classification, but not by subsets of the classification. In the three agencies where the data can be easily retrieved, either a separate classification title is assigned to each program, or the HR data includes a data field (such as the "cost accounting codes" used for reporting of federal dollars spent on the various programs) which identifies the program. These seven agencies are handicapped because they cannot determine turnover rates by program areas. As an example, employee turnover may be higher for those who investigate child abuse and neglect than for those who handle adoptions. However, they do not have data to confirm such an assumption. Turnover data for specific program areas would enable these organizations to design strategies to address retention problems.

## ***Recruitment and Selection***

In three agencies, the central merit system agency handles recruiting and selection; in seven the Human Resources Offices handle most or all of the recruitment and selection functions within their agencies. Six of the seven have an applicant tracking system. The seventh agency does not maintain applicant pools and essentially begins the recruitment process from scratch each time a new position is posted. The systems range from fairly basic ones that simply keep

track of demographic information to quite sophisticated ones that track qualifications, referral sources, degrees, work location availability, and so on.

Eight of the ten agencies have a database that permits them to identify the number of current vacancies, but only five of them are able to track the length of time jobs have been vacant or how long it takes to fill them. Keeping track of vacancies is a more elusive endeavor than it might seem because the vacancies that appear in the automated systems may not be “fillable” because of budget cutbacks, hiring freezes, etc. Sometimes positions are left vacant so that the dollars not used to pay salaries can be used to pay for rent, equipment, or contracting costs. It appears that even those organizations that can determine how long a specific position may have been vacant rarely run reports that show the average length of time jobs remain vacant or the average length of time it takes to fill positions.

None of the agencies methodically monitor how satisfied supervisors are with job applicants or new hires. Four of the agencies state that they receive anecdotal feedback and believe they have a reasonably good idea about how satisfied supervisors are with the recruitment and selection process.

### **Skill Sets**

Nine respondents record data about the education level and/or college degree of new hires. The one agency that does not record this data identified this as a serious shortcoming of the centrally administered data system. Seven of the nine of those who track educational attainment have done so for many years, but in two of the agencies, the data have only been recorded for those hired in the past five years in one agency and the last seven years in the other.

Only three of the agencies that track degrees could easily create reports showing the education attainment of employees within a specific program assignment such as foster care. Although educational attainment can easily be tracked for all employees within a given classification title, the data cannot be further refined to the program assignment within the classification title.

Only two of the agencies are able to run reports showing the languages all employees speak, although a third agency keeps a list of employees who have been certified as bilingual and who receive extra pay for using those skills on the job.

Eight agencies have automated systems to manage the registration process for agency provided training. The sophistication of the systems vary from one agency to another, however they are all able to identify the training classes taken by specific employees.

None of the agencies track the “computer skills” of their employees per se. However, the eight agencies that track agency-provided training can identify those employees who have taken specific computer-related classes.

None of the agencies track information on “special certificates” their employees earn, largely because most agencies do not offer or require special certificates for human services employees. Only one agency mentioned a state requirement for the licensure of caseworkers; however licensure was not tracked in their data system.

### **Compensation**

Compensation data seemed to be the most widely accessible information. Nine agencies can easily create reports showing the number of employees in a pay grade or at a specific pay step. The tenth agency uses broadbanding and merit pay rather than pay steps and can easily run reports showing the number of people receiving specific rates of pay, those receiving merit payments, etc. Despite the fact that compensation data is so accessible, four of the agencies are unable to obtain compensation data by program assignment within the broader classification title.

Only four of the agencies use some form of merit pay (annual merit bonuses, base rate increases or early movement to a higher pay step), and they are able to easily create reports to provide monitoring information about this.

Premium rates are defined as additional compensation for possessing bilingual skills, working in certain “high turnover” assignments, or having advanced degrees. Only three agencies used premium rates, and all three were able to create reports to monitor (extent of the use of premium rates, compliance with policy, etc.) them.

### **Performance Management**

All ten of the agencies have performance management systems where supervisors are expected to formally evaluate employee performance on at least an annual basis. However, in the words of the respondents, the quality of those systems ranges from “worthless” and “antiquated” to “sophisticated” and “state of the art.” Only one of the agencies had a totally automated performance management system in which the performance evaluation was completed online by the employee and supervisor, and all of the data were centrally stored for tracking and analysis.

Six agencies can create reports that provide details about employee performance levels. For example, reports show the number of employees achieving a particular level of evaluation (e.g., a numerical ranking, or a performance level term such as “meets expectations” or “exceeds expectations”). In one agency, the system was designed to provide some detail about the performance level of employees on certain quality and quantity measures, but the system “has never worked.” Only the agency having the automated system mentioned above could run detailed reports showing the performance level of employees on particular competencies or objectives.

All of the agencies track the more serious disciplinary actions (i.e., discharge, suspension, and demotion) and can run reports showing the number of disciplinary actions in a timeframe (monthly or quarterly) and by type.

### **Turnover**

Only three of the agencies produce regular turnover reports, and have a working definition of turnover. Two of the agencies define turnover as the number of employees leaving the agency during the year as a percentage of the number of employees in the agency (or similarly, the number of employees in a specific classification title as a percentage of all employees in that classification title). In the third agency, state law defines turnover as the number of employees terminating employment from state government during the year as a percentage of governmental employees. The Human Resources Director of that agency views their definition to be “worthless” as it applies to children’s services positions because many caseworkers transfer from their positions to other government jobs, yet their departure is not considered turnover. Of the two agencies that define turnover as the percentage of employees leaving the agency, the definition seems to be more meaningful for the agency that administers only child welfare programs than for the other agency, which houses all of the human services functions. In the latter case, departures from child welfare to other parts of the large umbrella organization are not considered turnover.

Although they do not publish regular turnover reports per se, four of the agencies do produce regular attrition reports. (An attrition report could easily be used as a basis for a turnover report. The agency could divide the attrition for the year by the average number of employees). Although there is some variation from one agency to another, the attrition reports basically identify the number of employees leaving the agency by departure reason (e.g., retirement, voluntary quit, discharge, etc.) and in some instances also include internal movement within the agency (e.g., promotion, demotion, location transfer, etc.).

The agencies that produce turnover or attrition reports are able to further refine their data so that turnover or attrition can be determined for a classification, office location, demographic group, or a combination thereof.

None of the agencies have adopted a definition of turnover that would distinguish between problematic turnover (e.g., quits, discharges, etc.) and acceptable turnover (e.g., promotions, retirements, etc). However two of the agencies that produce attrition reports state that they have on occasion analyzed their attrition data to determine the reasons for employee departure.

Eight agencies acknowledge that turnover among child welfare workers is a serious issue for their agency. Two of the agencies indicated that turnover among caseworkers is quite low, perhaps because of the economy, or perhaps because of recently improved wages and lower caseloads. All eight of the agencies, where turnover is a problem, believe that having better



turnover data would help them manage the problem. One of the major data deficiencies is the difficulty of distinguishing turnover rates between the different program assignments within a classification title (i.e. foster care workers within the social work specialist classification). A number of respondents stated that they believed turnover to be greatest among children's protective services investigators, and lowest among prevention and adoption caseworkers. However, seven agencies could not readily verify these assumptions because their data system cannot distinguish between program assignments within a classification title

### ***Job Satisfaction***

Four agencies have recent experience administering attitude surveys. One of the four agencies has a specific plan to administer them annually, and the other three plan to administer them regularly, but not necessarily each year. Two additional agencies have begun to develop a survey, but have not yet used it. Those that have used a job satisfaction survey have found it to be a helpful tool to address issues of employee morale, but none have been using their survey tools long enough to really comment on their long term value as a catalyst for change.

Six agencies use exit surveys with departing employees, while three others conduct exit interviews. However, eight of the nine agencies believe the response rate to be poor. The one agency that appears to be satisfied with the participation rate has exit interviews conducted by "personnel liaisons" located in regional offices.

Six agencies using exit interviews or surveys are able to analyze results by classification, location, or other demographics variables, but often don't have enough completed surveys to make the analysis meaningful.

### ***Workload/Productivity***

All of the agencies stated that they have comprehensive data systems to monitor workload and productivity. For the most part, the agency HR offices have no responsibility or involvement in these data systems. In one agency, Human Resources maintained the system to monitor caseload size and provide reports to the field and program offices. In all other instances, the responsibility for creating and analyzing reports dealing with caseload size, productivity, and work quality was handled by the program and/or field operations offices.

Although HR has little responsibility for collecting, maintaining, or reporting this type of data, HR does rely on the data for much of its decision making. Caseload data are used to identify geographic workload increases and decreases that affect recruitment and hiring strategies, and possibly even layoff decisions. Caseload and productivity statistics are also often the topic of discussions with employee unions who are concerned about employee workloads, job stress and performance measures.

## **Workforce Planning**

When asked how the agency used data for workforce planning, half of the respondents said that their agencies did not significantly rely on data for workforce planning. (The interviewer did prompt the interviewee by suggesting possible uses such as succession planning, retirement projections, recruitment strategies, diversity planning, and professional development planning.) Even among the five respondents who did rely on data in making certain HR decisions, two of them believed that they should rely more on data to make decisions. A number of reasons were offered for not having greater reliance on data in decision making:

- Five agencies believe that their Human Resources Office does not have the staff time to design and run reports, or to analyze the data necessary for effective workforce planning. Most do not have analysts on the HR staff who are primarily responsible for data tracking and analysis or workforce planning.
- Five agencies stated that they lack expertise within HR and are unable to receive priority attention from the IT organization to properly design software systems necessary to provide needed information. Tracking systems to monitor grievances, leaves of absence, workers compensation claims, and turnover are not usually features of the “jurisdiction wide” payroll/personnel data base, and must be designed within the agency. Another problem is that data needed by HR is often found in software systems developed for and controlled by other parts of the agency (i.e. accounting, budget, etc.) and HR lacks the expertise to develop software to integrate data from these various systems.
- Three agencies cited the absence of needed data, and/or the reliability of the data as a barrier to effective workforce planning. Respondents mentioned they could not get historical data, that coding of data is too general so that important information is lost, and that the central payroll/personnel system does not track certain information important to the agencies. Data are also sometimes lost, or at least very difficult to retrieve, when an agency updates its payroll/personnel system to new software.
- Three agency HR offices stated that they do not believe that the agency leadership considers workforce planning to be a priority. Furthermore the agency leadership, and/or executive team, did not use data provided to them (e.g., exit survey results, and turnover data) to address the issues.
- Three agencies cited problems with “software” and “technology” as barriers to effective workforce planning. They were concerned that the software is difficult to learn and use. Others believe that their software is outdated.

As the foregoing suggests, workforce planning efforts are frustrated within the human services agencies’ HR offices for a variety of interrelated reasons. Oftentimes the HR office barely has enough staff resources to deal with the day-to-day demands of the agency with little time left to do workforce planning. Centralized data systems which are not user-friendly and do not capture important pieces of data further frustrate planning efforts, especially when IT expertise is absent in the HR office.

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## **Appendix B: Interview Questionnaire**

# Interview Questionnaire

Organization \_\_\_\_\_ Contact Date/Time \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact Phone \_\_\_\_\_

## Agency Information:

Nature of Agency \_\_\_\_\_

Children's Services Programs Administered:

Protective Services \_\_\_\_\_  
Foster Care \_\_\_\_\_  
Adoption \_\_\_\_\_  
Juvenile Justice \_\_\_\_\_  
Employment & Training \_\_\_\_\_  
Welfare to Work \_\_\_\_\_  
Child Care Eligibility Staff \_\_\_\_\_

Residential Programs Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_  
Community Based Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_  
Day Care Staff Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_  
Day Care Vouchers Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Comments:

Number of Employees in Agency \_\_\_\_\_

Number of front line workers in Human Service Programs \_\_\_\_\_  
Para Professionals \_\_\_\_\_  
Professionals \_\_\_\_\_

State/County Administered

## Human Resources Information:

Merit System Authority or Autonomy

HR Information System Authority or Autonomy

What kind of Human Resource Data or Information is or would be most helpful for you to know about your front line workers in your human services programs?

## HR Information Availability:

### DEMOGRAPHIC

On a 1 to 5 point scale, with 1 being unavailable and 5 being readily available, how easy is it to get the following information:

	Classification	Program (Foster Care, PS, etc)
Age	_____	_____
Gender	_____	_____
Race/Ethnicity	_____	_____
Tenure	_____	_____

Can this demographic data be further refined, e.g. tenure of white females over thirty years old? \_\_\_\_\_

How would you (do you) use it? \_\_\_\_\_

Comments:



# Interview Questionnaire

## Recruitment and Selection:

What kind of information do you have, if any, which shows the length of time positions remain vacant or how quickly they are filled?

Do you have information on how pleased managers are with applicant pools and/or newly hired employees? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you keep an applicant tracking system? \_\_\_\_\_

General description (technical and qualitative)

Do you track other applicant information (e.g., demographic, referral source, number of applications per week, etc?)

Comments:

## Skill Sets:

On a 1 to 5 point scale, with 1 being unavailable and 5 being readily available, how easy is it to get reports by classification or program area on the following:

	Classification	Program
Education Level	_____	_____
Degree/Major	_____	_____
Languages	_____	_____
Agency Training	_____	_____
Computer Skills	_____	_____
Special Certificates	_____	_____

Comments:

## Compensation:

On a 1 to 5 point scale, with 1 being unavailable and 5 being readily available, how easy is it to get reports by classification or program area on the following:

	Classification	Program
Pay Rate/Grade	_____	_____
Pay Step	_____	_____
Merit Pay	_____	_____
Premium Rates	_____	_____

Comments:



# Interview Questionnaire

## Performance Management:

On a 1 to 5 point scale, with 1 being unavailable and 5 being readily available, how easy is it to get reports by classification or program area on the following:

	Classification	Program
Overall Performance Evaluation	_____	_____
Evaluation by Competency	_____	_____
Evaluation by Objective	_____	_____
Disciplinary Action	_____	_____

Comments:

## Turnover:

Does your agency produce periodic turnover reports? \_\_\_\_\_

If so, please describe them (definition of turnover, IT supports, etc)

Do you distinguish between problematic turnover (quits, discharges, etc) and acceptable turnover (promotions, retirements, etc)

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If no regular reports, on a 1 to 5 point scale, with 1 being unavailable and 5 being readily available, how easy is it to get reports by classification or program area on the following:

	Classification	Program
Turnover within Agency	_____	_____
Turnover by Location (counties, offices, buildings, etc)	_____	_____
Turnover by Demographic Variable (race, age, gender)	_____	_____

Comments:

## Job Satisfaction:

Does your agency ever do employee satisfaction (attitude) surveys? \_\_\_\_\_

Describe:

Nature of survey	_____
Frequency of survey	_____
How data is used	_____
Can data be analyzed by classification	_____
By program	_____
By location	_____

Does your agency conduct "Exit Interviews" or "Exit Surveys"? \_\_\_\_\_

Describe:

Nature of survey	_____
How data is used	_____
Can data be analyzed by classification	_____
By program	_____
By location	_____

Comments:



# Interview Questionnaire

## Workload/Productivity:

On a 1 to 5 point scale, with 1 being unavailable and 5 being readily available, how easy is it to get reports by classification or program area on the following:

Caseload Ratio	
Classification	Program
By Agency _____	_____
By Location _____	_____

Productivity (meeting standards of promptness)	
Classification	Program
By Agency _____	_____
By Location _____	_____

Qualitative Measures (error rates)	
Classification	Program
By Agency _____	_____
By Location _____	_____

Comments:

## Workforce Planning:

How do you use any of the data identified above for workforce planning purposes (e.g. succession planning, retirement projections, recruitment strategies, diversity planning, professional development planning, etc?)

Are there reports, or other data, that you do not have readily available which would be helpful for workforce planning purposes? \_\_\_\_\_

What prevents you from having or using such data or reports currently? (lack of IT hardware, software, systems expertise, low priority, etc)

General Comments: