



DCJ Caseworker Dashboard January 2024-March 2024 Quarter[^]

The caseworker vacancy rate has **Decreased to 10%**

Children seen in rolling year ending March 2024

Period Selector
January 2024-March 2024

		Funded FTE	Actual FTE	Vacant FTE	Vacancies (%) [*]	Children at ROSH	Children Seen	Children Seen (%) [*]
Districts	Central Coast, Hunter	307	317	-10	-	18,493	3,166	17%
	Far West, Murrumbidgee, Western NSW	279	250	29	10%	16,135	3,278	20%
	Illawarra Shoalhaven, Southern NSW	164	154	10	6%	9,049	1,723	19%
	Mid North Coast, New England, Northern NSW	318	265	53	17%	18,644	2,512	13%
	Nepean Blue Mountains, Western Sydney	310	263	47	15%	17,861	3,936	22%
	South Western Sydney	221	204	17	8%	14,739	2,490	17%
	Sydney, Northern Sydney, South Eastern Sydney	212	201	12	5%	14,243	3,089	22%
	Sub Total	1,811	1,654	157	9%	109,164	20,194	18%
Other	Statewide	436	370	66	15%	5,314	4,345	82%
	Office of Senior Practitioner	86	76	10	12%			
	Sub Total	522	446	76	15%	5,314	4,345	82%
Total		2,333	2,100	233	10%	114,478	24,539	21%

Caseworker dashboard for previous quarters can be found by clicking on [this text](#)



Further detailed child protection and OOHC information can be found in the quarterly *Services for children and young people* dashboard.

Please click on [this text](#) to access.



DCJ Caseworkers - Quarterly Data

Quarterly Vacancy Rate



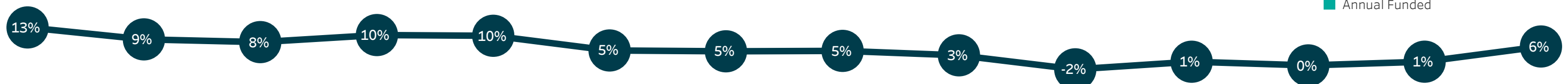
2019/20				2020/21				2021/22				2022/23				2023/24		
Jul19-Sep19	Oct 19-Dec 19	Jan 20-Mar 20	Apr 20-Jun 20	Jul20-Sep20	Oct 20-Dec 20	Jan 21-Mar 21	Apr 21-Jun 21	Jul21-Sep21	Oct 21-Dec 21	Jan 22-Mar 22	Apr 22-Jun 22	Jul22-Sep22	Oct 22-Dec 22	Jan 23-Mar 23	Apr 23-Jun 23	Jul23-Sep23	Oct 23-Dec 23	Jan 24-Mar 24
2,250	2,206	2,210	2,273	2,357	2,333	2,328	2,334	2,330	2,316	2,292	2,297	2,229	2,184	2,174	2,167	2,063	2,077	2,100

DCJ Caseworkers - Annual Data

Annual Vacancy Rate

Annual FTE

Annual Funded



2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13 (1)	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18 (2)	2018/19 (2)	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23														
1,880	2,149	1,966	2,149	2,019	2,185	1,862	2,068	1,867	2,068	2,026	2,128	2,032	2,128	2,029	2,128	2,080	2,148	2,253	2,219	2,238	2,261	2,338	2,333	2,309	2,333	2,190	2,333

^{*} Except data reported in District Subtotal, Statewide Subtotal and Total, the '-' symbol is used for Vacancies % where the number of Funded FTE is less than the number of Actual FTE.

[^] Figures presented in the dashboard are rounded and this may result in discrepancies between the sums of component items and their totals.

¹ On average 10% of the headcount of this cohort identify as Aboriginal.

² A weighted average has been applied to the Funded and Actual FTE to account for the increase in funded places for final quarter reporting in 2017-18 and 2018-19. The numbers previously reported in 2017-18 have been revised to reflect this.



DCJ Caseworker Dashboard December 2023 quarter

Explanatory Notes

DCJ caseworker

Caseworker numbers reflect frontline caseworkers and caseworker specialists across the community services spectrum, including those working in statutory child protection and out-of-home care. The figures do not include management staff associated with caseworkers.

Caseworkers provide protection and support services by:

- assessing and investigating reports of risk of harm to children

- providing assistance to vulnerable families via prevention and intervention services

- supporting and monitoring children in out-of-home care

- managing crisis situations

- promoting the safe and adequate care and protection of children through appropriate interventions as legislated through the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998* and departmental policy and procedures.

Casework specialists provide direct, practice-based professional support and development to casework managers and caseworkers. This includes:

- providing specialist advice on case practice matters

- working with caseworkers and managers to develop case practice skills

- undertaking practice and complex case reviews to develop the overall caseworker skill base

- providing expert assistance in aspects of case management in complex or sensitive cases

- acting as a conduit between DCJ, community partners and other agencies in respect to current practice, professional support, service development and policy.

FTE

FTE or full-time equivalent is defined as the equivalent of one position, filled continuously, full-time for the reference period. Total FTE combines all full-time and part-time positions. For example, a caseworker who works full-time counts as 1 FTE and a person who works half-time is 0.5 FTE. Actual FTE is an averaged FTE across the reference period (i.e. quarter or financial year).

Funded FTE

This is the number of full-time equivalent caseworkers funded in the DCJ Budget.

Actual FTE

Actual FTE refers to the number of full-time equivalent caseworkers working in a given reference period, excluding those on extended leave or parental leave or occupying positions funded by specific time-limited funding. Helpline time-limited roles are included and caseworkers on temporary secondments to other roles are excluded.

Vacancies

The number of vacancies represents the difference between the funded FTE and actual FTE during the reference period. The vacancy rates presented on the dashboard may differ from rates published by other sources due to the use of different methodologies. The '-' symbol is used for Vacancies % where the number of Funded FTE is less than the number of Actual FTE except data reported in District Subtotal, Statewide Subtotal and Total.

DCJ Districts

DCJ works across NSW through 16 districts to enable more localised planning and decision making, and improved links between service delivery management and frontline staff.

A child may receive services from multiple districts. Data reflects the district where the child's case plan is held at their first Risk of Significant Harm (ROSH) report of highest level of child protection assessment in the period. (A child or young person is assessed at ROSH if the circumstances that are causing concern for the safety, welfare or wellbeing of the child or young person are present to a significant extent).

The data on this dashboard directly links caseworker numbers to caseworker funding and actual staff on the ground.

The revision of the RAM provided an opportunity to revisit reporting of caseworker vacancies. The main changes in place from 2022-23 include:

- * moving from 16 sub districts to 7 Districts
- * removing casework specialists from district counts as responsibility for those positions sits with the Office of the Senior Practitioner.
- * moving some positions historically reported under statewide services to the districts where they are located.

Statewide services

Services that are provided statewide include:

- DCJ Helpline, which includes the Domestic Violence Line.

- Joint Investigation Response Teams (JIRT) have been renamed as Joint Child Protection Response (JCPR) teams to better reflect the collaborative efforts between DCJ, NSW Health and NSW Police to strengthen the future of the Program. These teams operate throughout NSW and respond to serious child protection reports which may involve a criminal offence. Only DCJ caseworkers are reflected in the dashboard.

- Other – this includes DCJ caseworkers working in Intensive Family Based Services, Metro Intensive Support Specialists, Adoption and Permanent Care Services Branch, Records Access Branch, Integrated Domestic and Family Violence, Family Court Co-located Team, Interstate Liaison, and Adoptions and Information Exchange.

Rounding

Figures presented in the dashboard are rounded and this may result in discrepancies between the sums of component items and their totals.

Statutory Child Protection

State and Territory governments have responsibility for funding and/or providing child protection services in Australia. NSW has its own legislation (Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998) that determines the policies and practices of its child protection system. The Act provides for mandatory reporting of children or young people at ROSH; conducting investigations and assessments of reports; developing care plans and parental responsibility contracts; removal of children and young people from primary carers; applying for emergency care and protection orders in the Children's Court; and placing children in OOHC. The Act also outlines permanent placement principles and provides for self-determination and participation in decision making by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Child protection statutory processes include:

- Reports, assessments and substantiations: Child protection reports are assessed to determine whether a field assessment is required, if referral to support services is more appropriate or if no further protective action is necessary. A field assessment will obtain more detailed information about a child who is the subject of a report and determine whether the report is 'substantiated' or 'not substantiated'. A substantiation indicates there is sufficient reason (after an assessment) to believe the child has been, is being or is likely to be, abused, neglected or otherwise harmed.

- Care and protection orders: In situations where further intervention is required, application will be made for a care and protection order to the relevant court, usually a last resort.

- Out-of-home care (OOHC): Children will be placed in OOHC when they are the subject of a substantiation and require a more protective environment. OOHC is considered an intervention of last resort, with the current emphasis being to keep children with their families wherever possible. An attempt to subsequently reunite children with their families will be made through preservation programs. Placement within the wider family or community will be considered, especially under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle.

- Family support services to facilitate preservation: seek to prevent family dysfunction and child maltreatment occurring, through providing treatment, support and advice to families, and may include developing parenting and household skills, therapeutic care, and family reunification services.

Children Seen

There has been a change in the definition of 'children at ROSH seen by DCJ', with more stringent requirements introduced in 2017-18. More steps are taken by caseworkers to record the work they do to meet the definition of 'seen'; in particular a manager must now give formal approval. Previously, an investigation could be undertaken over two stages (stage 1 - information gathering; stage 2 - assessment). Data for 'Children Seen' are not comparable to data on investigations and assessments published previously.

Child Protection Re-reporting

Proportion of children at ROSH reported with a face-to-face assessment and case plan closed with the plan closure reason of 'plan goal achieved' who were re-reported as being at ROSH within 12 months of the case plan closed.

Data sources

- Child protection data:
 - After Q4 2017-18: ChildStory/Corporate Information Warehouse (CIW)
 - Prior to Q4 2017-18: KiDS/Corporate Information Warehouse (CIW)
- Workforce data: DCJ human resources system.