



Support an Across-the-Board Pay Raise for ALL State Employees

In December 2016, the Legislative Budget Board approved funding for a emergency targeted pay raise for many positions in the agency, and the 85th Legislature funded the pay raise through the biennium. The DFPS LAR for FY 2020-21 includes Exceptional Item #4 which would fund a \$12,000 raise for APS case workers, an unspecified amount for APS supervisors, and \$6,000 for Statewide Intake Specialists and supervisors. Funding this Exceptional Item, and including job titles that have been wrongly excluded, will stabilize the DFPS workforce.

The targeted raises were a step in the right direction, however there is much more needed to be done to address the ongoing turnover crisis in DFPS. Funding the targeted pay raises in Exceptional item #4 as well as an across the board pay raise for all positions that have been excluded from the previous targeted raise will help stabilize the workforce throughout the agency. A list of job titles included in the 2016 pay raise is on page 2, along with a list of job titles excluded from that raise. The exclusion of these positions for the recent and proposed raises has damaged morale in the agency. Repeating the same mistakes again will widen the gaps for vulnerable Texans to fall through as more tenured employees leave the agency.

Less experienced, less tenured staff are being paid more than experienced employees

Some supervisors are making less than workers in their unit. For example, a caseworker receiving a \$12,000 raise along with additional pay for an advanced degree, earns about \$300 per month more than a supervisor with an advanced degree. This is partly because the 20% pay raise for supervisors was calculated from base pay, not actual salary.

Job titles requiring years of experience still excluded from targeted raise and are paid less than new hires

Throughout the agency, positions that are critical to the mission of DFPS have been excluded from raises. From Day Care Coordinators, Contract Specialists, Trainers, Family Group Decision Making, Investigation Screeners, Legal Specialists and others, excluding these positions has sent the message that these jobs are not important. As a result employees have transferred, quit, and retired from these critical positions since the message from budget makers and the agency is clear.

Turnover at dangerous levels for employees protecting vulnerable Texans

Adult Protective Services, which plays a critical role in protecting vulnerable Texans from abuse, exploitation, and neglect were completely excluded from the previous. In APS, the turnover rate has climbed at an alarming rate since the 2016 targeted pay raises were approved (see below). Funding a real across the board pay raise for all employees in APS is an important step to reducing the turnover rate and improving services.

Vital support staff who receive pay low enough to qualify for public assistance continue to be passed over

Excluding support staff from the pay raise is especially damaging. Human Service Techs and Administrative Assistants average under \$27,000 per year. Many qualify for Children's Medicaid or SNAP benefits because the pay is so low. From transporting clients and families to ensuring case files are complete and in order, support staff are a critical part of our agency. Under valuing their role and ignoring the critical need for a real pay raise will lead more support staff to seek better pay outside of the agency.

Turnover Spike In APS

After being excluded from the 2016 targeted pay raise, turnover in APS has reached nearly 50% for entry level workers, and APS supervisor turnover shot up from under 3% in FY 2017 to over 14% in FY 2018. This unsustainable level of turnover is a direct result of the exclusion of APS staff from the targeted pay raise. The strategic plan developed by APS leadership identifies noncompetitive salaries as a weakness that feeds into high turnover rates and low morale. Instead of waiting for the next tragedy to grab headlines, we need elected leaders to stand up for quality state services by funding exceptional item #4 and implementing an across the board pay raise for all positions. The skyrocketing turnover rates mean both new employees and experienced staff are leaving APS. A real pay raise would slow down the exodus and stabilize the APS workforce.

FROM: DFPS-APS 'Protecting with Purpose, Passion and Persistence' Strategic Plan FY18-22

THREATS

- Lack of appropriate and adequate funding;
- Growing elderly population while losing staff;
- Political and legislative support
- High turnover rate/lack of competitive salaries

EXCLUDED FROM 2016 PAY RAISES:

- **ALL APS EMPLOYEES**

APS employees investigate claims of abuse and neglect against anyone 18 or older, and provide services for those in need.

AVG PAY: \$37,007, **AVG TENURE:** 2.25 yrs, **TURNOVER RATE:** 19.2%

SUPERVISOR AVG PAY: \$43,300, **AVG TENURE:** 10 years

- **ALL CCL/RCCL EMPLOYEES**

CCL licenses day care providers and investigate allegations of abuse and neglect in facilities. RCCL performs the same functions, but for Residential operations

AVG. PAY INSPECTORS AND SPECIALIST: \$35,526,

AVG. TENURE: 2 years, **TURNOVER RATE:** 25%

- **ALL SUPPORT STAFF**

Human Service Technicians and Admin. Assistants help keep the agency functioning where it matters most. From transporting clients and families to ensuring case files are accurate, support staff interact daily with clients, courts, and everybody involved in a case.

AVG PAY: \$27,737, **AVG TENURE:** 6.25 yrs

Job titles excluded from the pay raise require experienced, tenured employees who understand how our agency and local jurisdictions work, as well as the providers and community resources available for our clients.

Here's a short list of some titles left out of the targeted raise:

- **Family Group Decision Making, Family Group Conferencing, Circle of Support:** They work with families, communities, and children to address problems and concerns
- **Field Training Supervisors:** Train and directly supervise new hires
- **Day Care Coordinators:** Coordinate day care payments for children in care
- **Contract Specialists:** Monitor and enforce contracts with a wide array of providers
- **Eligibility Specialists and SSI Coordinators:** Responsible for coordinating enrollment of children in benefit programs so they can receive support, treatments, and therapy
- **Intake Specialists:** Process all reports of abuse and neglect from the public and professionals
- **Attorneys and Paralegals:** Represent the agency in court, and prepare cases for hearings and trials

INCLUDED IN 2016 PAY RAISES:

Caseworker raises in following programs get an additional \$1,000/month
Supervisor raises get an extra 20%/month

- Conservatorship
- Foster and Adopt
- Family Based Safety Services
- I See You
- Investigation
- Kinship
- Special Investigator
- Preparation for Adult Living
- Central Placement Units

Administrator raises for titles listed below get an additional 10%/month

- Program Director
- Program Director (SIs)
- Program Administrator
- Assistant Regional Director
- Deputy Regional Director
- Regional Director