



Buncombe County Board of Commissioners

Request for Board Action

Meeting Date: 8/15/2023

New Business

Department: Human Resources Department

Presenter(s): Sharon Burke, Human Resources Director

Contact(s): Stoney Blevins, Health & Human Services Director & Matthew Baker, Strategy & Innovation Supervisor

Subject: Child Protective Services Investigations Situational Overview/Recommendations and Recruitment Incentive

Brief Summary: Child Protective Services – Investigations is suffering from a shortage of qualified Investigative Assessment & Treatment Social Workers (IATSW).

1. Investigations is losing experienced staff due to resignation/transfer

- a. Limited qualified workforce statewide, leading to greater competition for workers
- b. CPS Investigations is a demanding role including crisis response, unpredictable schedules, often hazardous/ dangerous work conditions and interactions with volatile clients
- c. Existing CPS – Investigations staff are transferring to other service areas within Social Work, however, only one internal employee has transferred to CPS – Investigations during the last five years

2. There is a low volume of applicants for this position

- a. Stringent qualifications for the position requiring a specific degree (BSW)
- b. 35% of positions are vacant as of 8/4/2023
- c. Wages offered are not as competitive as other organizations

3. Less employees increases the number of cases that each employee carries

- a. Increases turnover
- b. Pushes caseworkers over the state mandated maximum caseload
- c. Investigations supervisors have been carrying caseloads due to staffing constraints since January 2023.

To that end, The County Manager is proposing a temporary pay allowance of \$200 per pay period for IATSW's and Supervisors within the Child Protective Services – Investigations program until the position can have a classification review or until 76%

(22 out of 29) of positions are filled and have completed pre-service training. If approved, the results of the review would take effect with the Fiscal Year 2025 pay plan adoption. Funding for this allowance will be covered using lapsed salary within the existing Health & Human Services budget.

Additionally, the County Manager is proposing a Recruitment Incentive for existing employees to assist in recruiting for hard-to-fill positions, specifically within the Child Protective Services – Investigations program, 911 Emergency Communications, and Detention Facility. This incentive applies only to the current employee who recruits a person to fill an open position within the programs outlined above. It does not apply to employees who self-select to apply for a position in those areas or to employees whose official role in the organization is to recruit new employees. This incentive has a maximum amount of \$750 per new hire recruited and will follow the structure outlined in the table below:

Recruited employee completes one week (from start date), the employee who recruited them receives:	Recruited employee completes six months (from start date), the employee who recruited them receives:	Recruited employee completes one year (from start date), the employee who recruited them receives:
\$250	\$250	\$250

Recommended Motion & Requested Action: Approve temporary allowance for IATSWs and Supervisors in the Child Protective Services – Investigations Program of \$200 per pay period until a classification review can be conducted and approved with the Fiscal Year 2025 pay plan or until 76% (22 out of 29) of positions are filled and pre-service training is complete.

Approve the Recruitment Incentive for existing employees who recruit new hires into CPS – Investigations, Public Safety Communications (911) Dispatchers, and Detention Facility Officers to a maximum of \$750 per employee recruited.

County Manager’s Comments and Recommendation: Approve the above recommendations.